



**DELHI UNIVERSITY  
LIBRARY**

DELHI UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

Cl. No. V682:1:No F8.1

Ac. No. 121502 Date of release for loan 31.1.1971

This book should be returned on or before the date last stamped below.  
An overdue charge of Six nP. will be charged for each day the book is kept overtime.




**A HISTORY OF ETHIOPIA**  
**NUBIA AND ABYSSINIA**

BY THE SAME AUTHOR  
THE EGYPTIAN SUDAN: ITS HISTORY AND  
MONUMENTS

186





# A HISTORY OF ETHIOPIA

NUBIA & ABYSSINIA

(ACCORDING TO THE HIEROGLYPHIC INSCRIPTIONS  
OF EGYPT AND NUBIA, AND THE ETHIOPIAN  
CHRONICLES)

BY

SIR E. A. WALLIS BUDGE, K.T.

M.A. and Litt.D. Cambridge, M.A. and D.Litt. Oxford,  
Lit.D. Durham, F.S.A., Sometime Keeper of the Egyptian  
and Assyrian Antiquities in the British Museum, Star of  
Ethiopia 3rd Class

IN TWO VOLUMES

WITH FORTY-NINE PLATES, THIRTY-ONE ILLUSTRATIONS  
IN THE TEXT, AND A MAP

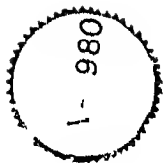
VOLUME I



METHUEN & CO. LTD.  
36 ESSEX STREET W.C.  
LONDON



*First Published in 1928*



121502

VG 2:1:11  
[...]



PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN

I dedicate  
this HISTORY OF ETHIOPIA  
to  
GENERAL SIR FRANCIS REGINALD WINGATE, BART.  
G.C.B., G.C.V.O., K.C.M.G., G.B.E., D.S.O., D.C.L., LL.D.

Eye and Ear of the Egyptian Army; Director of Military Intelligence in  
Egypt and the Sūdān; Sirdar and Governor-General of the Egyptian Sūdān;  
Member of the Mission to Menyelek II, King of the Kings of Ethiopia;  
His Majesty's High Commissioner in Egypt, etc.

as a mark of my admiration for his work as

SOLDIER, ARABIST AND AUTHOR

and of my gratitude for the ready sympathy and effective help which he gave  
me, both officially and privately, in carrying out the Missions to Egypt and  
the Egyptian Sūdān on which I was sent by the Trustees of the British  
Museum between 1885 and 1914



## PREFACE

IT seems certain that classical historians and geographers called the whole region from India to Egypt, both countries inclusive, by the name of "Ethiopia," and in consequence they regarded all the dark-skinned and black peoples who inhabited it as "Ethiopians." Mention is made of "Eastern" and "Western" Ethiopians, and it is probable that the Easterners were Asiatics, and the Westerners Africans. In the present work, which I have called "A History of Ethiopia," I have made no attempt to describe the history of that large portion of the earth's surface which the Greeks called "Ethiopia," but only of that comparatively small section of it which is to-day named, both by large numbers of Orientals and by Europeans generally, "Abyssinia," and also of the country of Kūsh, which is now known as "Nubia." "Abyssinia" is a Europeanized form of "Ḥabash," or "Ḥabish," or "Ḥabsha," which is the name of the Arab tribe from Yaman who invaded the country some centuries before the Christian Era; and for nearly two thousand years Orientals have called the country by the name of its ancient invaders. Abyssinians of all classes speak of their country as "Ethiopia," and dislike the Arabic name "Ḥabash." Every king of Abyssinia, from the time of Tasfā 'Īyāsūs Yēkūnō 'Amlāk (A.D. 1270-1285) until to-day, has been proud to adopt as his chief title "NEGŪS NAGAST ZA 'ĪṬĒYŌPĒYĀ," *i.e.* "King of the kings of Ethiopia."

It is not certain who first gave the name of "Ethiopia" to Abyssinia, but it is clear that the Syrian (?) monks who translated the Greek Bible into Gē'ēz (*i.e.* Ethiopic) identified Kūsh, or Nubia, with Abyssinia, and generally translated the name of Kūsh by "Ethiopia<sup>1</sup>." In the Table of Nations given in Genesis x. 7 the name of Kūsh is transcribed correctly and we have Ἰθίοι δὲ Χάμ·Χοῦς, Μεσοπείην, Φοῦδδ καὶ Χανόαν. The identification of Kūsh with Abyssinia under the name of Ethiopia, made by the translators of the Ethiopic version of the Bible in the 5th (or 6th) century, has,

<sup>1</sup> In Isaiah xliii. 3 where the Hebrew text mentions Mišāim and Kūsh, *i.e.* Egypt and Kūsh, the LXX translates these names Αἰγυπτίον καὶ Αἰθιοπίαν.

## PREFACE

for many centuries, been accepted by the Abyssinians. And to this day the Abyssinian in reciting Psalm lxxviii (*v.* 31) says, "Ethiopia shall make her hands reach unto God."

During the preparation of this work I have been driven to the conclusion that the "Ethiopians" whose manners and customs have been so fully described by Herodotus, Diodorus, Strabo, Pliny and others were not Abyssinians at all, but the natives of Upper Nubia and the Island of Meroc, and the negroes and negroid peoples who inhabited the hot, moist lands which extend from Southern Abyssinia to the Equator. It seems to me very doubtful if any of the classical writers ever knew of the existence of the high tableland of Abyssinia, with its wellnigh impassable mountains several thousands of feet in height, and more doubtful still if they were able to describe its physical characteristics, which at best could only be known by a limited number of caravan masters. The hieroglyphic inscriptions of the VIth, XIIth and XVIIth Dynasties prove that caravans travelled from Egypt to the countries round about the Blue Nile, and to regions much further to the south, but there is no mention in them of any country which can be identified with Abyssinia proper. In fact the Egyptian inscriptions cannot be said to yield any direct information about the real Abyssinia or its peoples, and even the Nubian and Meroitic inscriptions throw very little light upon the history of the period in which they were written. From the cuneiform inscriptions we can expect no information about Abyssinia, though both the Assyrians and the Hebrews knew of the existence of the country of Kūsh, and that it lay to the south of Egypt.

We can then only construct a History of Abyssinia out of such materials as are to be found in the country itself: and these, alas! are few and unsatisfactory. There are no inscribed buildings, obelisks, tombs, etc. to help us as in Egypt, for the monoliths at Aksūm, and the rock-hewn temples made by King Lālībalā are uninscribed, and the neolithic monoliths, inscribed and uninscribed, discovered by Father Azats in Ogaden, Soddo and Guerāguē have, up to the present, yielded no historical information. And it is unlikely that they will do so, even if, or when, the symbols and scratchings on them are deciphered. Moreover, they are probably the work of Arabs. The only old buildings in Abyssinia are the

## PREFACE

church, which serves as a Cathedral, at Aksūm, which was restored by the Portuguese in the 16th century, and the half-ruined fortress and palace which were built at Gondar by 'Īyāsū II. Nearly every other building has been completely destroyed either by the Abyssinians themselves during the wars which the "kings" of the various provinces waged against each other, or by the Arabs who, under the redoubtable Grāñ, the "Left-handed," burned nearly all the churches, monasteries, palaces and houses in the country. The only trustworthy historical inscriptions dealing with Abyssinia which have come down to us are those which were written in Greek during the reigns of Ptolemy III, Ptolemy IV and Zōscalēs(?), and the great trilingual inscription in Greek, Sabaeen and Ethiopic which was discovered by the German Aksūm-Expedition, and has been published with such success by Dr E. Littmann, its Director.

The names of several of the kings who reigned at Aksūm during the early centuries of the Christian Era have been found on coins and deciphered by Schlumberger, Hill, Littmann, Kammerer and Anzani, but the places of some of them in the King List have not been ascertained, and they supply no general historical information.

Ultimately we are driven to construct a history of Ethiopia or Abyssinia from the Royal Chronicles and chronological works which have been compiled at various times by native authors, and are to be found in manuscript in the great National Libraries in London, Oxford, Paris, Rome and Berlin, and in the small libraries of university towns on the Continent. The texts of most of these have been published, with translations, by Basset, Perruchon, Halévy, Guidi, Conti Rossini, Marcel Cohen, Conzelman, Littmann, Esteves de Pereira, Weld Blundell and others, and these are the main sources from which the history of Abyssinia from the middle of the 13th century downwards is derived. Although these Chronicles are regarded everywhere in Abyssinia as the supreme and final authorities for the history of the country, it is impossible to accept them as historical documents in the true sense of the word. In some of them the kings of Abyssinia are said to be descended from Solomon, son of David, king of Israel, by Mākēdā, the Queen of Sheba. In others we are told that the first king of Abyssinia was Aithiopsis, the son of Ham, the son of Noah, and in others the progenitor of the kings of the country is declared to have been

## PREFACE

Adam. Chronicler after chronicler has repeated these legends, and they are firmly believed in by the literati at the present day. As to the "Queen of Sheba" it is very likely that some enterprising "queen of the South" *did* make a journey to Jerusalem and interview Solomon, but it is far more likely to have been a queen of some part of Yaman or Ḥadramawt, than the queen of a region on the western shore of the Red Sea. The facts of history suggest that at the time when Solomon was reigning, about B.C. 970, the natives of the country which we now call Abyssinia were savages. The Ḥabasha tribe from Yaman were the first to introduce civilization into the country, as Conti Rossini and Littmann have shown, and the story of a queen who went to Jerusalem probably entered the country with them. There is also the possibility that the story was borrowed from the Jews, who had settled themselves as merchants in Abyssinia some centuries before the Christian Era, and whose writings are full of stories of the greatness and wisdom of Solomon. There is no doubt that a grain of historical fact underlies the legend, but it is now quite impossible to separate it from the accretions in which it is buried.

The Chronicles also tell us that Aksūm was founded by Solomon, or by his son 'Ēbna El-Ḥakīm, *i.e.* Menyelek I, but it is certain that such was not the case, for the first mention we have of the city (μητρόπολις τῶν Αὐξωμιτῶν) occurs in the *Periplus* (see Muller, *Geographi graeci*, tom. I) and the facts of history show that it was not founded until the 1st century of our Era. The truth is that the Abyssinians know nothing about the true history of their country in pre-Christian times. They have always had a passionate desire to be considered a very ancient nation, and the vivid imagination of their scribes has borrowed the traditions of historical facts preserved by the Semites, *i.e.* Yamanites, Ḥimyarites, Hebrews, etc., and modified them to suit the aspirations of their fellow-countrymen. They possessed no lists of the pre-Christian kings of Abyssinia, because no Abyssinian "kingdom" existed before the time of Za-Ḥeklē 𐩌𐩣𐩪𐩥𐩰 whose name probably appears in the *Periplus* under the form of Zōskalēs, Ζωσκάλης (Müller, *Geographi graeci*, tom. I. p. 26). And the first "King of the kings of Ethiopia" known to us is Yekūnō 'Amlāk (A.D. 1270-1285), who brought the whole country under his rule.

## PREFACE

The history of Abyssinia during the Christian Era, as presented by chroniclers and scribes, until we come to the second half of the 13th century, is, to say the least of it, incomplete and, in some respects, is wholly untrustworthy. It is however only fair to say that this is due to the fact that whatever King Lists or chronological works may have existed at Aksūm, and in the great monasteries in the south, were nearly all burnt or otherwise destroyed before Yekūnō 'Amlāk ascended the throne. During his reign literary activity began in Abyssinia, but it is the sad fact that no Ethiopic manuscript older than the 14th century is known to exist. It is possible that the six MSS. specially mentioned by Zotenberg in the "Avertissement" to his *Catalogue des MSS. Éthiopiens*, Paris, 1877, may belong to the 14th century, but Wright and others doubted it, and with good reason. The oldest dated Ethiopic MS. in England is in the British Museum (Oriental No. 719) and it contains the History of King Lālībalā Gabra Maṣṣal. It was written by an admirer, or perhaps, disciple, of this king called 'Abbā 'Amḥā, who intended it to be preserved in the monastery of Golgotha, and was subsequently given to the church there by King Zar'a Yā'qōb, or Constantine I, who began to reign in 1434. Nearly all the Ethiopic MSS. extant belong to the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, and it is probable that the King Lists found in them and the misstatements of historical facts are derived from the works of Arab and Coptic Christian writers.

In the Chronicles and other native works we are told that Christianity was introduced into Abyssinia by the Apostle Thomas, and by Ferēmenāṭōs (Frumentius) and his brother Aedesius who taught 'Ēlā-'Azguāguā, the son of 'Ēlā-'Alādā, and converted the Abyssinians, and 'Abrehā and 'Aṣbehā, are stated by many Abyssinian writers to have been the first two Christian kings of their country. Now the Apostle Matthew laboured in various places, but there is no evidence that he ever went to Abyssinia. In some form or other the story of Frumentius and Aedesius is probably true, but the extent and effect of their missionary labours are greatly exaggerated. The inscriptions discovered by Littmann prove, in my opinion, beyond all doubt, that the first king who adopted Christianity as the National Religion of Abyssinia was 'Ēzānā, a mighty warrior, and the greatest of all the kings of



## PREFACE

Aksūm, who reigned in the second quarter of the 4th century. These inscriptions show that 'Ēzānā abandoned the symbols of his pagan gods in his later inscriptions, and adopted the Cross, and became a worshipper of the One God of Heaven, Who had given him the victory and made him king of all the countries from Aksūm to the Equator, and from the Nile to Arabia inclusive. He followed the example of Constantine and made Christianity the official religion of his country, because it was politically and commercially expedient. The arguments which Littmann has adduced in proof of this fact appear to me to be unanswerable. But when we turn to the native Chronicles we find no mention of this great and far-reaching act of 'Ēzānā, and their writers repeat *ad nauseam* the names of 'Abrehā and 'Aṣbehā as the introducers of Christianity into Abyssinia. Further, in the Chronicle published by Basset we are told that these kings "built Aksūm," whilst other Chronicles claim that it was "built" by Menyelek I, about fifteen hundred years earlier. Contradictions, anachronisms and confounding of the names of persons and places are common in works dealing with history and chronology, and prove that their authors and copyists lacked the ability to write history as we understand it. Much confusion has been caused by the mistakes made in copying by ignorant and sleepy and careless scribes, and the similarity of some of the letters which are used as numerals has given rise to many mistakes in making calculations. In a carelessly written manuscript it is often difficult to distinguish between 𐌹 6 and 𐌹 7 and between 𐌹 8 and 𐌹 20, and 𐌹 60, and between 𐌹 30 and 𐌹 40.

The reader who will take the trouble to examine the Manuscripts of the lists of kings given on pp. 204 f. of this book will see that it is impossible to reconcile their statements, and it seems to me that they represent the attempts made by ancient scribes to include in one list all the names of the "kings" of the great provinces of Abyssinia known to them. These lists have been the despair of every scholar who has tried to build up a scheme of Abyssinian chronology, and among those who have failed in their efforts to do this is my friend Mr C. F. Rey, the distinguished traveller in Abyssinia. When writing his recently published work (*In the Country of the Blue Nile*, London, 1927) he decided to give

## PREFACE

in it a list of the "kings of Ethiopia," and he wrote to H. E. Rās Tafari and asked him to supply him with one. His Highness caused a list of the "Ethiopian kings and the history of the Ethiopian Kings of kings (Emperors)" to be made, and forwarded to him, and a translation of it is given by Mr Rey in his Appendix A. Now as this list was drawn up by Rās Tafari's orders we may fairly assume that the task of compilation was committed to the most competent scholars and scribes in Adis Ababa, and we may be excused if we further assume that it represents the considered opinions of the Government officials in Abyssinia about the names of the kings, and the order of their succession, and the lengths of their reigns. In any case this King List must be briefly examined here, for it contains some startling statements. The list begins with A.M. 970 (B.C. 4530) and ends with 7279 = A.D. 1787, and is divided into eleven sections, thus:

Dynasty of	No. of kings	A.M.	B.C.
1. Ori, or Aram	21 kings	970-2256	4530-3244
The kings between the Flood and the Fall of the Tower of Babel	[not stated]	2256-2787	3244-2713
2. Kam	25 kings	2787-3515	2713-1985
3. Agdazyan (Joktan)	52 kings	3515-4518	1985-982
4. Menyelek I	67 kings	4518-5500	982-A.D. 9
5. ?	35 kings	5500-5806	A.D. 9-306
6. ? [Christians]	32 kings	5806-5993	306-493
7. Kālēb	27 kings	5993-6420	493-920
8. Zāgwē	11 kings	6420-6753	920-1253
9. Yekūnō 'Amlāk	23 kings	6753-7000	1253-1500
10. Lebna Dengel	3 kings	7000-7055	1500-1555
11. Gondar	18 kings	7055-7279	1555-1787

Total 314 (not 312) kings in 6310 years,  
the average length of the  
reigns being a little over  
20 years, which is too high.

98 kings reigned over Ethiopia before Menyelek I.

165 kings reigned over Ethiopia before the birth of Christ.

## PREFACE


231 (not 230) kings reigned over Ethiopia before the reign of Pazena Ezana. (No. 32 of Dynasty VI.)

About 20 kings (ʿIyāsū Baʿāla Ṣegāb to Lidj ʿIyāsū) reigned over Ethiopia from 1787 to 1916, but these are not mentioned in the new King List.

I have compared the King List published by Mr Rey with the King Lists given in the manuscripts in the British Museum and in the Bodleian, and it differs greatly from them. We may note:

I. Adam is no longer claimed to have been the great ancestor of the kings of Ethiopia, and the first king whose name is given in it is ORI, who is identified with ARAM, the son of Shem (Genesis x. 22). Thus it is clear that the modern Abyssinians prefer to regard themselves as the descendants of Shem and not Ham, because "The Will of God decreed sovereignty for the seed of Shem, and slavery for the seed of Ham" (KEBRA NAGAST, Chap. 74).

II. The names of the kings who reigned during the period of 531 years between the Flood and the fall of the Tower of Babel are not given. The older King Lists and other works state that these kings were pagans and idolators and worshippers of the "serpent," and apparently they are not considered to be worthy of being mentioned by name.





III. Twenty-five of the kings who reigned after the fall of the Tower of Babel are said to have been of the "tribe of Kam"; now Kam is clearly the Egyptian Kam , i.e. Egypt, and many of the Kamite kings have names which are of Egyptian origin, e.g. Hoikam = Ḥer-kam, Amen, Ramenpahte = Men-pekhiti-Rā.





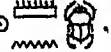

IV. The 52 kings of the third group are said to be the descendants of Joktan (Yoḳṭān), the son of Eber (Genesis x. 25), but judging by their names many of them were Egyptians!

V. The 35 kings who reigned during the first three centuries of our Era are said to have been "Christianized" by the Apostle Matthew. But, according to the *Gadla Hawaryāt* Matthew never preached in Ethiopia, and he was beheaded in Parthia. (See also Lipsius, *Apostelgeschichte*, Vol. II, Pt. 2, p. 129.) In the next section of this King List it is distinctly stated that Christianity was introduced into Ethiopia by Abbā Salāmā, or Frumentius, A.D. 327. And the eunuch Djān Darabā, whom Philip baptized (Acts viii. 27),

## PREFACE

if he taught at all, taught at Napata or Meroc. Thus the new King List contradicts itself.

A remarkable feature of the new King List is the inclusion in it of the names of kings of Mesopotamia, Egypt and Nubia. Thus in Section I we have the name Nimroud (No. XII), Seneferou and Assa. NIMROUD is, of course, Nimrod, SENEFEROU is Seneferu , who raided the Sūdān, and ASSA is  (Vth Dynasty), whose officer Baurtet brought back to Egypt a pygmy from the Land of the Spirits. Among the kings descended from Joktan is AMEN ASRO, *i.e.* Asru-meri-Amen  a Merottic prince; AMEN EMHAT, *i.e.* Amenemhat , a name borne by four kings of the XIIth Dynasty, and the names of several of the HIGH PRIESTS OF AMEN, who styled themselves kings of all Egypt, *viz.*:

- |                     |               |   |
|---------------------|---------------|---|
| No. 43. HERIOR      | = Her-Ĥer     |    |
| No. 45. PINOTSEM I  | = Pai-netchem |    |
| No. 46. PINOTSEM II | = Pai-netchem |    |
| No. 47. MASAIERTA   | = Masaharta   |    |
| No. 48. RAMENKOPERM | = Menkheperā  |   |
| No. 52. MAKEDA      | = Maāt-ka-Rā  |  |

Among the names of the descendants of Menyelek I we find AMEN HOTEĖ (Amen-ĥetep), RAMISSU (Rameses), SABAKA and SABAKON (Shabaka), ERDA AMEN (Ruĥ-Amen), NUATMEAWN (Tanutamem), PIYANKIHI (Piānkhi), ASPURTA (Aspelta), HARSIATAW (Ĥersatef), NASTASSANAN (Nastasen), WUHA ABRA (Uahabrā), PSEMIT (Psammetichus), TARAKOS (Tirhākāh), APRAS (Apries), and TUTIMHEB (Teĥuĥi-em-ĥeb). None of these names of kings of Egypt and Napata appears in the King Lists which have been published from the Ethiopic MSS. in our Libraries, and it would be interesting to know why they were inserted in the new King List, and on what or whose authority. It seems to me that some of the native scribes have been reading a modern European

## PREFACE

History of Egypt, and that they have incorporated in their King Lists the names of some of the kings of Egypt who laid Nubia and other parts of the Sūdān under tribute, and the names of the priest kings and Nubian kings of Napata and Meroe. The native name of every king of Abyssinia has a meaning, but if the names of the kings of Egypt which the scribes have taken from a European book were translated into Ethiopic letters they would be absolutely meaningless.

The new King List however emphasizes and proves one very important fact concerning the history of Abyssinia, viz. that no native king or Rās before Yekūnō 'Amlāk was able to call himself truthfully "King of the kings of Ethiopia." And before that date almost all the kings of Abyssinia were of Asiatic origin, and the descendants of Southern or Northern Semites. The facts of history show that the Abyssinians borrowed everything of importance from the nations round about them. Their oldest civilization they owed to the Hīmyarites and Yamanites, and their language is closely allied to that of the peoples in the south of the Arabian Peninsula. The Hebrews from Palestine taught them the arts of commerce and something of the Religion and Law of Jahweh. The Abyssinians proclaim passionately their relationship to the Hebrew Patriarch, and probably for centuries before the Birth of Christ, Jerusalem was a place of pilgrimage to them, as Mecca is to the Muslim. The KEBRA NAGAST describes the stealing of the Ark of the Covenant from Jerusalem by Menyelek I as a glorious and patriotic act, and the introduction of the Law and worship of Jahweh into Abyssinia as a blessing bestowed on the country by Almighty God. The Kūshites (Nubians) passed on to the Abyssinians much which they themselves had learned from their Egyptian conquerors, and in the early centuries of the Christian Era the Greek merchants who traded with the merchants of Aksūm by way of Adulis taught them how to increase their wealth, and to raise their standard of living. But after 'Ēzānā had made Christianity the official religion of his country, the Abyssinians were unable to found a Church for themselves, and it was to the Jacobite Church of Alexandria that they looked for their Abūna or spiritual head, and their dogmas, liturgies, church equipment, etc. The wonderful rock-hewn churches of Lālībalā were the work not of Abyssinians,

## PREFACE

but of Egyptian and Syrian artificers which he brought from Egypt and Jerusalem. The old bridge over the Blue Nile at Agam Deldi was built by the Portuguese, as were many important forts, churches and palaces throughout the country. There is no native art, no sculpture, no painting, for sculptured figures are not allowed in churches; and the paintings of the Virgin and Saints which are hung on the walls are debased copies of those which were made by the monk artist Branca Leone. And practically speaking there is no native literature, for the greater part of it consists of translations of Arabic and Coptic works. Even the syllabary is derived from the Ḥimyaritic alphabet, and the numerals are letters of the Greek alphabet. The debt which the Abyssinians owe to the Jesuit Fathers, whom they persecuted and murdered or expelled, has never been adequately recognized. These able and devoted men taught them not only the Way of Christ, but morals and manners. A true and full account of their labours has not, as far as I know, ever been published, and I regret that exigencies of space have prevented my giving in this book summaries of the documents in Spanish, Portuguese and Italian which Beccari has printed in the fifteen volumes of his great work, *Rerum aethiopicarum scriptores inediti*, Rome, 1905-1914.

A word or two may now be said about the present work. The idea of writing it was first suggested to me by His Highness Rās Makonnen, or Makuannen, nephew of Menyelek II, in 1905, when one Sunday in July he came with his suite, accompanied by Sir John Harrington, H.B.M.'s Consul-General in Abyssinia, to inspect the Ethiopic manuscripts and the Egyptian antiquities preserved in the museum of Sir Henry Bruce Meux, Bart., and Lady Meux at Theobald's Park, Waltham Cross. He examined with the greatest interest the facsimile editions of Ethiopic MSS. which Lady Meux had printed at her private expense, and then he suggested to me as the editor and translator of the Meux MSS. that I should write a History of Ethiopia from the time of Adam to the present day. Sir John Harrington acted as interpreter, and through him the Rās told me that he would pay for printing the work, provided that he could have an unlimited number of copies of it in Abyssinia. He said that he intended to establish a printing press at Adīs Ababa, and that he would print editions of all the

## PREFACE

works used in the churches and monasteries of his country. Before leaving Theobald's Park he begged Lady Meux to publish the *Life and Miracles of Takla Hāymānōt*, the premier saint of Abyssinia, and stablisher, or perhaps more correctly, the founder of the so-called "Solomonic line of kings" of that country; she promised to do so, and in due course the work appeared<sup>1</sup>, and was dedicated to him. His plans for the revival of literary activity in Abyssinia did not materialize for he died in March 1906.

In this book I have attempted to give the principal facts of the history of Abyssinia, both legendary and real, as they are found in the native legends and in chronicles and chronological compilations, the texts of many of which have been published by European scholars. Real history begins with the founding of the kingdom of Aksūm, either in the first century B.C. or the first century A.D. For the history of the first four centuries of our Era the volumes of the official Report of the *Deutsche Aksum-Expedition* by Littmann and T. von Lüpke are invaluable. The new texts are very important, and Littmann's deductions from them throw an entirely new light on the manner in which Christianity was introduced into Abyssinia. And thanks to von Lüpke we now have, for the first time, accurate drawings of the monoliths of Aksūm. A cloud, more or less dense, obscures the history of Abyssinia for several centuries, and comparatively little is known of the Zāgwē who were the rulers of the country from the beginning of the 10th to the end of the first half of the 13th century. From that time to the present day, thanks to the Chronicles which we possess, the acts of the individual kings of the kings of Ethiopia are tolerably well known. I have made the summaries of the reigns given herein chiefly from the editions of the texts published by Guidi, the veteran scholar, whose knowledge of Ethiopic and Amharic is unrivalled, by Conti Rossini, who has travelled extensively in Abyssinia and is our first authority on the dialects of the country, both ancient and modern, by Littmann, Director of the German

<sup>1</sup> *The Life and Miracles of Takla Hāymānōt in the version of Dabra Libānōs, and The Book of the Riches of Kings, the Ethiopic texts edited from Brit. Mus. Orient. No. 728 with English translations, to which is added an English translation of the Wāldēbbān version, by E. A. Wallis Budge. With 165 coloured plates. Privately printed for Lady Meux. 2 vols. folio. London, 1906.*

## PREFACE

Expedition to Aksūm, by Weld Blundell, editor and translator of a section of the Royal Chronicle, by Basset, Perruchon, Conzelman, Pereira and others. My narrative stops at 1916, the year of the accession to the throne of Queen Zawādītu.

The inclusion of a section on the history of Nubia seemed to me to be very necessary, for the Egyptian hieroglyphic inscriptions show that the Nubians traded with the countries of Southern Abyssinia in the time of the Old Kingdom of Egypt, and the Nubian inscriptions of a later date throw much light on the trade which was carried on between Egypt and Nubia and the countries round about the Blue Nile and the countries to the south and south-east. The excavations made by Garstang at Meroe, and by Griffith at Marawi and Faras, and by the Americans at Karmah and on the pyramid fields of Napata and Meroe have yielded very important results, and supplied much new information about the later native kingdoms of Napata and Meroë, and the famous Candace Queens. I have dispensed with footnotes throughout the book, because frequent references to the same book or books become tedious and distract the reader's attention. But I have mentioned all "key" texts and authorities within parentheses in the narrative, and in respect of the others, the Bibliography on pp. 631-644 will assist the reader.

The Abyssinians are as ignorant about the names and order of their early kings as they are about their early history, and I have found it impossible to harmonize the lists given in the various manuscripts, for they differ seriously, even about the forms of their names. It is clear that they are incomplete, and that the scribes who compiled them had no authentic lists from which to copy. And the list recently made, which Mr Rey has published, only adds to our difficulties.

The study of Abyssinian history from the time of Yekūnō 'Amlāk to the present day shows that the Kings of the kings of Abyssinia never made any attempt to create a continuous and settled form of government. The acts of each king were dictated by the necessities of the moment and by his personal wishes. The heads of the various provinces of the country fought and plundered each other's territory with impunity, and they only yielded complete obedience to the king when they were convinced that his army was



## PREFACE

strong enough to crush them. Thus it came about that no uniform system of taxation existed in the country, and the improvement of commerce, and the education of the people generally, were things never contemplated seriously by the king's government. Kings were content to let the ancient customs of the country prevail, and they made no attempt to control them or change them, unless it suited their personal convenience. But the kings of Abyssinia were never apathetic in the matter of their religion, and with very few exceptions they were whole-hearted and loyal supporters of their National Church, the creed and dogmas and liturgies of which are derived from those of the ancient Jacobite Church of Alexandria. The tenacity with which the Abyssinians have clung to Christianity, in spite of invasions, wars with Arabs, Turks and the Negroid peoples, intertribal wars, famine and plague, and hostile external and internal influences, for nearly sixteen hundred years, must evoke our admiration. I do not suggest that "black magic," witchcraft and demonology, and the practices connected with the cult of superstitious rites and ceremonies have ceased to exist in Abyssinia, far from it! but it is certain that they do not hold the dominant positions in the minds of all the natives which they held formerly.

In this book I have made no attempt to discuss the character of the Abyssinian, and the future of his country politically. These matters can only be dealt with satisfactorily by those who have travelled in the country, and by those representatives of the Great Powers who have resided in Abyssinia for several years. But I may say that I have met many Abyssinians, priests and others, in Cairo, Palestine and Syria, and have found them courteous and kindly and even quixotic in their ideas and in the treatment of their neighbours. The Abyssinian has only been studied satisfactorily by those who, like Mr Weld Blundell and Mr C. F. Rey, have travelled for months at a time through his country. My own small experience showed me that the Abyssinian has a good conceit of himself, and that he considers himself in no wise inferior to the European! Did not King John IV "smash" the Egyptians in 1875 and 1876, and did not Menyelek II destroy four Italian armies at Adua in 1896? "Give us guns," one said to me, "and we will take India, and kill all the heathen dogs in that devil-ridden country."

## PREFACE

The Abyssinians are brave and fearless, and they make better soldiers than tradesmen; they love fighting both with lethal weapons, and with their tongues—in the Law Courts! A man will spend money on litigation, and starve himself to be able to do so. The Abyssinian is slow to trust the European, and he is wholly suspicious of him, but is that to be wondered at when he looks about him and sees how much of his country has been annexed by the Great Powers, which have always professed the greatest friendship for him and interest in his welfare? The truth is that the ancestors of the Abyssinian, both pagan and Christian, lived by fighting and the pillaging of caravans for many centuries, and he is more fitted, both physically and mentally, for a soldier than for any other profession. Though kind to his wife and family, and generous to those in want, he is callous to the sufferings of both animals and men. The sight of the butcheries and atrocities committed by the victorious Abyssinians at Matammah in 1875, and the tortures inflicted on the wounded when the town fell into their hands, horrified even the Negroes who were in their train. It was the butcheries which went on daily under his very eyes that drove Bruce out of Abyssinia.

The future position of Abyssinia no thoughtful writer would dare to predict. The country is exceedingly fertile, and its natural resources are great. All that is required to make her prosperous is a strong, honest government in the capital, and money. But where is the money to come from? The Abyssinian will never allow the foreigner to be master in his country, for independence is more to him than life itself. It was only when Theodore realized that General Napier intended to restrain his liberty, and to make him a prisoner, that he destroyed himself. The Abyssinians cannot find money enough to build railways and make roads, and do all the things that are absolutely necessary for the development of commercial enterprises on an adequate scale as things now are, and if England or France or Italy offered money for these purposes, the offer would be at once regarded as an attempt to buy the country from its legitimate owners. The shy and suspicious native has no belief in the promises and pledges that have been so often made by European Powers that they will respect the independence of the country, for he has seen far too many of them broken. And he

## PREFACE

cannot get the necessary moneys from commercial syndicates, for they would demand securities which the Abyssinians are unable to give. The real remedy lies with the Abyssinians themselves, for if the taxes were assessed justly, and collected honestly and paid into the Exchequer, and the Customs dues were treated in the same way, competent authorities state that the revenue would be amply sufficient to inaugurate and carry out all the reforms necessary for the commercial, intellectual and spiritual development of the high-spirited and brave people which the Abyssinians certainly are. One thing is certain. Abyssinia can never maintain her independence, and take her rightful place among the civilized nations of the East, unless her rulers adopt the methods of government and the systems of administration which are in use among neighbouring nations. Her enlightened Regent Rās Tafari is well aware of this fact, and all true friends of Abyssinia must hope that the reforms which he is contemplating may one day be effected in their entirety and that his constant efforts to increase the prosperity and well-being of his people may be ultimately crowned with success.

In connection with the illustrations given in this work my thanks are due to the Trustees of the British Museum for permission to photograph a number of vignettes in certain Ethiopic MSS. and to reproduce the scenes in the temple of Rameses II at Bēt al-Wālī in Nubia; to the Right Hon. the Earl of Elgin, C.M.G., for a photograph of the portrait of James Bruce of Kinnaird, preserved at Broomhall; to Major-General, the Lord Edward Gleichen, K.C.V.O., for permission to reproduce plates in his book *With the Mission to Menelik*, 1897, London, 1898; to General Sir Francis Wingate, Bart., for permission to reproduce the scene of the funeral of King John IV from the native picture in his possession; to Mr C. F. Rey, F.R.G.S., for permission to reproduce plates from his book *Unconquered Abyssinia*, London, 1923; to the Proprietors of the *Illustrated London News* for permission to reproduce some of the drawings of Mr William Simpson, the artist who accompanied the British Expedition to Abyssinia; to Mr E. R. D. Maclagan, C.B.E., Director of the Victoria and Albert Museum, for a photograph of the gold chalice presented to the Church of Ƙueskuām by Īyāsū I and his Queen Berhān Mōgasā;

## PREFACE

to Dr G. F. Hill, Keeper of Coins and Medals in the British Museum, for a set of casts of the moneys coined by Menyelek II; and to H. H. Rās Makonnen, Dr Dillmann, Dr Wright and Prof. Dr Ignazio Guidi for the photographs from which the reproductions given in this book were made. I am further indebted to the official Report of the *Deutsche Aksum-Expedition* by Littmann and von Lüpke for drawings of the monoliths at Aksūm, etc., and the complete texts of the great trilingual inscription of 'Ēzānā, which had been inadequately published by Bent and D. H. Muller. The drawings of the rock-hewn churches of Lālibalā made by Raffray fifty years ago are still the best presentment of these wonderful works available, and I have reproduced several of them from his publications on Abyssinia.

My thanks are due too to the proof-readers of the Cambridge University Press, whose eyes are like those of the god who presided over the Scales of Judgement in the Hall of Osiris, for they travel over the written sheets and detect unerringly the mistake which the writer has made "with his finger," from the misplaced or wrongly-turned comma to the false concord and omitted word. The variations in the spelling of proper names observable here and there in this book are due to no oversight on their part, but to the authorities whom I have been obliged to quote because the native texts were not available. The alphabetical arrangement of the 8500 slips of the Index I owe to the kindness of Miss Evelyn Reed. It is hoped that the appearance of this History may lead to an increased study of Abyssinia, and of the religion, and manner and customs of one of the oldest Christian nations in the East.

E. A. WALLIS BUDGE

LONDON  
48 BLOOMSBURY STREET  
BEDFORD SQUARE

May 12, 1928

,

•

## CONTENTS

### NUBIA

	PAGE
Preface . . . . .	vii
History of Nubia under the Pharaohs . . . . .	I
The Nubian Conquest of Egypt . . . . .	27
The Dynasty of Nubian Kings in Egypt . . . . .	33
The later Nubian Kings of Napata . . . . .	39
The Stele of Sameriamen Hersatef . . . . .	45
The Stele of Pānkh Aluru . . . . .	48
The Stele of Nastasen . . . . .	48
Nubia in the Ptolemaic Period . . . . .	52
The Kingdom of Meroë . . . . .	56
Classical writers on Nubia and Meroe . . . . .	62
Nubian and the Merotic Writings . . . . .	78
The Excavations of Meroë . . . . .	79
Merotic Religion . . . . .	82
Nubia under the Romans . . . . .	99
Nubia under the Arabs . . . . .	103
Christianity in Nubia . . . . .	111
The Inscription of Silco . . . . .	114

### ABYSSINIA

Habesh, Habashat . . . . .	120
The Country . . . . .	122
The Area . . . . .	122
Divisions of Abyssinia . . . . .	123
Configuration of the Country . . . . .	125
The Lakes of Abyssinia . . . . .	128
Population and the People . . . . .	129
Trees and Vegetation, Wild animals . . . . .	132
Birds, Crops, Reptiles and Insects . . . . .	133
Railways and Trade . . . . .	134
Money . . . . .	135

## CONTENTS

	PAGE
The Abyssinian Calendar . . . . .	138
Climate . . . . .	141
The Religions of the Abyssinians . . . . .	142
The Rock-hewn Churches of Lālībalā II (or III?). . . . .	164
The History of Abyssinia; General Remarks . . . . .	178
Antediluvian Period . . . . .	187
Patriarchal Period . . . . .	190
The Visit of the Queen of Sheba to Solomon . . . . .	194
The Abyssinian King Lists . . . . .	204
The Zāgwē . . . . .	213
The Legendary History of Abyssinia . . . . .	220
How 'Ēbna Ḥakīm stole the Ark of the Covenant. . . . .	224
The Reign of 'Ēbna Ḥakīm . . . . .	227
Greek Inscription of Ptolemy III . . . . .	233
The Kings from Bāzēn to 'Abrehā and 'Aṣḃehā . . . . .	234
Stele of Adūlis . . . . .	240
'Ēzānā of Ḥālēn . . . . .	242
Inscriptions of 'Ēzānā . . . . .	245
'Al-'Āmēdā . . . . .	259
'Ella 'Aṣḃehā . . . . .	261
Bēta 'Esrā'ēl . . . . .	264
Gabra Maṣḃal . . . . .	265
The Period from about A.D. 600-970 . . . . .	269
The Reign of 'Armāḥ . . . . .	270
The Zāgwē Kings . . . . .	277
The Reign of Lālībalā . . . . .	279
Na'akuetō La'ab . . . . .	283
Yekūnō 'Amlāk . . . . .	285
Yagbe'ā Ṣeyōn and his five sons . . . . .	287
Wedem 'Ar'ād . . . . .	287
'Āmda Ṣeyōn I . . . . .	288
Newāya Krestōs Sayfa 'Ar'ed . . . . .	298
Newāya Māryām Wedem 'Asfarē . . . . .	299
Dāwīt (David) I . . . . .	300
Tēwōderōs (Theodore) I . . . . .	301
Yeshāḥ (Isaac) . . . . .	301
'Endreyās (Andreas) . . . . .	303

## CONTENTS

	PAGE
Takla Māryām (Ḥezba Nāñ) . . . . .	303
Sarwē Īyāsūs (Meḥreka Nāñ) . . . . .	303
'Āmda Īyāsūs (Badel-Nāñ) . . . . .	303
Zar'a Yā'kōb (Constantine I) . . . . .	304
Ba'eda Māryām (Cyriacus) . . . . .	312
'Eskender (Constantine II) . . . . .	320
'Āmda Şeyōn II . . . . .	323
Nā'ōd 'Anbasā Bazar . . . . .	323
Lebna Dengel Dāwīt (David) II . . . . .	325



## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

### PLATES

Her Imperial Majesty Zawadītū. (Reproduced by permission from Rey, <i>Unconquered Abyssinia</i> , London, 1923) <i>Frontispiece</i>	Facing page
The Painted bas-reliefs at Bēt al-Walī—Rameses II charging the Nubians and receiving tribute . . . . .	24
Ruins of a mud-brick temple of Tirhākāh at Samna . . . . .	34
A typical village in Southern Abyssinia . . . . .	64
View of the village of Kassām near Fāzōglī. (Reproduced from Russegger, <i>Reisen</i> , Plate 20) . . . . .	64
The Fortress of Kasala . . . . .	74
The smaller Egypto-Romano temple at Nagaa . . . . .	74
Ptolemy's map of Egypt and Ethiopia . . . . .	120
Abyssinian mountains with "Ambās" near Adua . . . . .	122
View of the flat-topped mountains of Şaka and Ambās in the country of the 'Agāw . . . . .	122
A native of the Eastern Desert drawing water from a well . . . . .	126
The reed-raft used by the Abyssinians on Lake Şānā . . . . .	128
An Abyssinian warrior armed for the fight . . . . .	132
Coins of Menyelek II . . . . .	136
St Luke painting the portraits of Christ and the Virgin Mary	148
The Lord Christ . . . . .	150
The Temptation of Christ in the Desert . . . . .	154
The Annunciation . . . . .	154
John the Baptist baptizing our Lord in the Jordan . . . . .	156
Taking down the body of our Lord from the Cross . . . . .	156
St Michael the Archangel, the "Angel of the Face" . . . . .	158
The Coptic Church at ADUA . . . . .	160
The Church at Aksūm, commonly called the "Cathedral" . . . . .	160
Exterior of the monolithic Church dedicated to the Saviour of the World . . . . .	168
Exterior of the monolithic Church dedicated to the Lord Emmanuel . . . . .	168

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	<i>Facing page</i>
Bas-relief in the monolithic Church dedicated to St Michael and Golgotha . . . . .	172
Exterior of the monolithic Church dedicated to St George .	174
Exterior of the monolithic Church dedicated to Abbā Libānōs . . . . .	174
TAAKHA MĀRYĀM as seen from the higher ground . . .	176
Abbā Gregory, the Abyssinian, the teacher of Ludolf . .	180
Hiob Ludolf, the Father of Ethiopic studies in Europe . .	182
James Bruce of Kinnaird, the great African traveller . .	184
Christian Friedrich August Dillmann . . . . .	186
A service held outside a Church in Abyssinia on a day of festival . . . . .	242

## ILLUSTRATIONS IN THE TEXT

	PAGE
Granite Ram, sacred to Amen. Found at Jabal Barkal . .	21
Stele of King Aspelta . . . . .	42
Sepulchral Stele of a prince of Meroe, with an inscription in the Merotic character . . . . .	76
Tablet for offerings, with an inscription in the Merotic character . . . . .	77
Scene from the large temple at Nagaa . . . . .	85
A priest offering incense to Arkenkherel, a king of Meroe .	86
Amani-Shakhatē, Queen of Meroe . . . . .	87
Portrait of Amani-Shakhatē, Queen of Meroe . . . . .	88
Gold armlet from a pyramid at Meroe . . . . .	89
Gold hinged-armlet from a pyramid at Meroe . . . . .	90
Head of Dionysos . . . . .	90
A king of Meroe (Neb-maāt-Rā) . . . . .	93
A god worshipped at Nagaa (Jupiter Sarapis?) . . . . .	94
A king of Meroe adoring a hawk-headed crocodile . . . . .	95
The ram-headed god Khnemu . . . . .	97
Winged hawk-headed lion . . . . .	97
A lion-headed god . . . . .	97
Rā(?) riding upon a winged, woman-headed lion . . . . .	98

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	PAGE
The Vulture-goddess tearing an enemy . . . . .	98
The king riding an elephant . . . . .	98
The god Bes playing a harp before a lion . . . . .	99
A king of Meroe receiving a bow and arrow from a god . . . . .	101
The tomb of the Mahdī at Ummdurmān . . . . .	111
Drawings from the TOPOGRAPHIA of Cosmas, an Egyptian monk . . . . .	124
Plan of the monolithic Church of the Saviour of the World . . . . .	169

# A HISTORY OF ETHIOPIA

## NUBIA

THOUGH the country of Ethiopia is frequently mentioned by classical writers, Homer, Herodotus, Strabo, Diodorus, Pliny and others, and though each speaks as if its situation were well known, none of the information which they supply enables us to describe its extent or to say exactly where its boundaries began and where they ended. Homer speaks (*Odyssey*, I. 23) of

The Ethiopians, utmost of mankind,  
These eastward situate, those towards the west<sup>1</sup>,

and he tells us (*Iliad*, I. 423) that

For to the banks of the Oceanus,  
Where Ethiopia holds a feast to Jove,  
He journey'd yesterday<sup>2</sup>.

These extracts only show that Homer thought that there were eastern and western Ethiopians, that they were a "blameless" people, and that their country lay near the Ocean, and presumably far to the south of the land of the Greeks. Herodotus (B.C. 484-425?) says (III. 114) that the country called "Ethiopia," ἡ Αἰθιοπία, lies "where the south declines towards the setting sun," and that it is "the last inhabited land in that direction." He goes on to say that there is much gold there, and many elephants, and all sorts of wild trees and ebony, and that the men are taller, handsomer, and longer lived than anywhere else. Elsewhere he speaks of (III. 97) "the Ethiopians bordering upon Egypt, who were reduced by Cambyses when he made war on the long-lived Ethiopians," and it is clear that he thought that the country of Ethiopia was in Libya, near Egypt, though he considered it to be a part of India, *i.e.* Asia. The geographer Strabo describes Ethiopia as a part of Egypt (XVI. 4, § 8 ff.), but places it to the south of Egypt, and Pliny (*Hist. Nat.*, VI. 35) makes the distance of the first region of Ethiopia, which is the country of the Evonymitae, to be 54 + 72 + 120, *i.e.* 246 miles to the south of Syene. From these various statements we may conclude that Homer and Herodotus call all the peoples of

<sup>1</sup> Αἰθιοπίας, τοὶ δὲ χθρὰ δεδαλαται ἔσχατοι ἀνδρῶν.

<sup>2</sup> Ζεὺς γὰρ ἐς Ὀκεανὸν μετ' ἀμύμονας Αἰθιοπῆας  
χθιζὸς ἔβη.

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

the Sūdān, Egypt, Arabia, Palestine and Western Asia and India "Ethiopians," and that Strabo and Pliny restrict the use of that term to the peoples who lived in the northern and southern parts of the Valley of the Nile. Beyond the Evonymitae, to the south, lay the kingdom of Meroe, and Pliny says that the whole of this country bore the names, first of Aetheria, then of Atlantia, and then of Aethiopia, and he derives the last name of the country from that of Aethiops, the son of Vulcan (VI. 30). But it is clear that the natives of that part of the Nile Valley which Pliny calls "Ethiopia" had a name for their country, and it is equally clear that it was not derived from the name of the son of Vulcan. Pliny, apparently, did not know that name, and if he did he preferred to use "Ethiopia," and to give it a derivation which seemed to him to harmonize with the climate of the country and the physical characteristics of the people in it. It is hardly likely that Homer invented the names Ethiopia and Ethiopians, and we may assume that both were in existence when he wrote, and that he only used them as well-known appellations of a country and people of whom neither he nor his contemporaries had any exact knowledge. As Herodotus, Strabo and Pliny connect Ethiopia with Egypt, it might be thought that the original form of the name of Ethiopia would be found in some of the Egyptian hieroglyphic inscriptions which describe raids made by the Egyptians in the regions to the east and south of them, but nothing of the kind has ever been identified. Therefore it is clear that both *Αἰθίοψ*, "an Ethiopian," and *Αἰθιοπία*, the name of his country, are of Greek origin, the former name meaning "burnt face," and the latter the country of burnt faced men (*Αἰθιοπῆες*). And there is no doubt that the earliest classical writers considered to be "Ethiopians" all the peoples who were swarthy or brown-skinned or black-skinned (including the negroes), and the country in which they lived, whether the Sūdān or Western Asia or India, to be "Ethiopia." This being so we need not be surprised that the earliest classical writers do not assign geographical limits to "Ethiopia."

Semitic writers had a far better knowledge of the situation of the "land of the burnt faces" than the Greeks, and one and all identified it with some portion of the Valley of the Nile, which was correct. And they called it by the name which the "burnt faces"

## NUBIA

who lived there knew it, viz. "Kashi," "Kasha," "Kaashshe," "Kaashshi," "Kasi," and perhaps "Kūsh." The first five variant forms of the name are found in the Tall al-'Amārnah tablets which were written in the 14th century B.C. (see Knudtzon, *Die el-Amarna-Tafeln*, Leipzig, 1915, Bd. II. p. 1576), and the sixth is the Hebrew Kūsh, כּוּשׁ (Isaiah xi. 11, Ezekiel xxix. 10). The prophet Ezekiel includes the country in Egypt, which was to be laid waste "from the tower of Sewēneh (Syene, the modern Aswān) even unto the border of Ethiopia" (Kūsh). The Assyrian king Ashurbanipal (B.C. 668-626) also grouped Kūsh with Egypt, and in his Annals the name is written *matu Ku-u-si*, 𐎠 𐎢𐎽𐎢𐏁 𐎠𐎢𐏁. The kings he fought against were Tīrhākāh and Tanutamen, who, as we know from the Egyptian inscriptions, reigned at Napata, which was at that time the capital of Kūsh. Thus it is clear that in the 7th century B.C. "Ethiopia" represented the country to the north of the Fourth Cataract Kūsh formed a province of the great Empire of Darius I Hystaspes, and its name is mentioned in the list of the countries subject to him inscribed behind the figure of the king at Naksh-i-Rustam under the forms "Ku-shi-ya" and "Ku-u-shu" (see Weissbach, *Die Keilinschriften der Achameniden*, Leipzig, 1912, p. 88).





But in spite of all this exact knowledge about the situation of the "land of the burnt faces," the name given to it by the Greeks became general, and although we do not include India in Ethiopia, many post-Christian writers did, and many mediaeval and modern writers make it include Abyssinia, and use "Ethiopian" and "Abyssinian" as synonymous terms. Curiously enough the early Abyssinian scribes adopted the name of Ethiopia under the form ኢትዮጵያ, 'Ītēyōpēyā, and they called an Ethiopian ኢትዮጵዊ, 'Ītēyōpāwī, or ኢትዮጵያዊ, 'Ītēyōpēyāwī. They even gave to their national language the name of "tongue of Ethiopia," ልሳነ ኢትዮጵያ, and we ourselves speak of it as "Ethiopic." But the people generally had other names for their country and language, and among these the commonest are "Bēḥēra Gē'ēz," ብሔረ-ግዕዝ, literally "the country of migration," or "Bēḥēra 'Agē'āzī," ብሔረ-አግዛዥ, "the country of the migrated (*i.e.* free) man," and "Lēsāna Gē'ēz," ልሳነ-ግዕዝ, "the tongue of the Gē'ēz" (*i.e.* migration). In practice "Gē'ēz" means Abyssinia, *i.e.* the land to which the "burnt

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

faces" migrated from Arabia, the Abyssinian himself, and his language. The Gě'ez language is commonly called "Ethiopic" by us, and is to be carefully distinguished from the common language of Abyssinia at the present time which is known as "Amharic." Gě'ez was one of the many dialects of the Arabic-African branch of Semitic languages, and it, owing to the influence of Aksūm and the people of Tigray, became the principal language of the whole country. The Bible, and the works of many of the Christian Fathers, and the Liturgy, and important works in Greek, Hebrew and Arabic, were translated into it, and it was the language of the Court and of the Church and of all the officials of the Government and of educated people generally. But as the power of the Aksūm Government declined, that of the south-west province of Amhara increased, and in a comparatively short time the dialect of that region, *i.e.* Amharic, became the ordinary language of the Court and its officials. Gě'ez, or Ethiopic, maintained its position as the literary language of the country from the middle of the 13th to the end of the 16th century, and copies of the Scriptures were written in it, and all documents of an official character, and many translations of Arabic and Coptic books. It held in Abyssinia the position which Latin held in Europe. Early in the 17th century the savage and barbarous Gallas began to overrun the country, and the old social order and civilization, and the Ethiopic language, practically disappeared under their attacks upon Church and State. But the Gallas failed to wipe out Ethiopic entirely, for it is still the ecclesiastical language of the country, and every here and there in Abyssinia a few priests are to be found who can read and understand the old language.

The works of Strabo, Diodorus and Pliny tell us much about the people of Ethiopia or Kūsh, but it is clear that all their statements refer to the kingdoms of the Island of Meroé and Napata, and they seem to have been ignorant concerning the ancient history of the country. All they reported in their books was obtained from hearsay, which was based upon the information current among the Greeks and the Roman officials in Egypt. As the ethnological table in Genesis (x. 6) couples Kūsh with Mizraim (Egypt), and as some classical writers place Kūsh either alongside of or to the south of Egypt, it is natural that we should turn to the Egyptian inscrip-

## NUBIA

tions for information about the history of Kūsh, both early and late. When we examine these we find that they tell us a great deal about the raids which the Egyptians made in Kūsh, but from them we can learn nothing about the native history of the Kūshites. They make it quite clear that they held the northern Kūshites to be a weak and cowardly people who were subject to them in some degree, but it is also clear that in some parts of Kūsh there lived men who were by nature fine soldiers and brave men, whom the Egyptians were glad to draft into their armies, which were usually composed of men who disliked military life and discipline. Among the Kūshites too were the "Blacks" or Negroes, who had wool for hair, thick lips and prognathous chins, and were different in every way from the men who had black skins, straight black hair and orthognathous chins, like the ancient and modern Nubae. But before we begin to summarize the facts supplied by the Egyptian inscriptions we must introduce the modern name for the region which Homer, Herodotus and others called "Ethiopia," and that part of it which the Semites called Kashi, Kūsu and Kūsh. The country of the "burnt faces" is none other than the "Sūdān," سُوْدَان, or more correctly Bilād es-Sūdān, بِلَادِ السُّوْدَان, *i.e.* "the countries of the Blacks"; and strictly speaking "Kūsh" represents that particular region in the Land of the Blacks which the Egyptians called Kash , or Kesh , and the Copts ⲉⲥⲟⲩⲩⲏ. But while the Land of the Blacks stretches right across Africa and includes a part of Abyssinia, the region called Kash was a specific portion of the Nile Valley, and the central part of it is probably represented to-day by the flourishing province of Dongola. Its chief town was situated somewhere near the modern town of Marawi (Sanam abu-Dōm), which lies about 10 miles from the fort of the Fourth Cataract, and under the New Kingdom it was called Napata. Amenhetep III (B.C. 1410) says that the frontier of Egypt on the south was at Karui, or Karei , and he probably refers to the region later called Napata. From time immemorial gold was brought into Egypt from the south by way of Kash or Kūsh, and the country was called Nubia, or the "land of gold," the old word for gold being nub , and this is the name by



## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

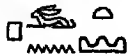
which that portion of the Nile Valley is known to-day. All these facts show that Kūsh or Nubia, miscalled by travellers and others "Ethiopia," is not Abyssinia, and that both ethnographically and geographically, the two countries are in no way connected, though each is inhabited by peoples who have "burnt faces," *i.e.* who have swarthy brown or black skins.

Of the condition of the country of Nubia at the time which corresponds to the Neolithic Period in Egypt, say B.C. 10,000-5000, we know nothing, but in the light of modern investigations it is not difficult to imagine what it was like. The people were pagan savages, and they must have lived in constant terror, owing to their belief in evil spirits and demons of all kinds, and have been ruled by the grossest superstition. Like many of the Sūdānī peoples of the present time they worshipped stones, mountains, animals, trees and reptiles. The country was, no doubt, broken up into a series of small provinces or states, which cannot be called kingdoms, each of which was ruled by the equivalent of the modern Shēkh, who governed his people in the usual African manner. Almost as important as the ruler was the "medicine man" or magician. Inter-tribal fights, wars, and raids on neighbouring tribes to get cattle and women, must have been common. When they fought, like their descendants, they fought to kill their foes, and when they conquered their enemy they seized everything that was his, and burnt his village. Their weapons were made of stone, and they hunted the animals in the desert, or snared or trapped them. In certain districts they lived on dates and on the crops and plants that grew in the river and its swamps, and in others, especially in Northern Nubia, they bartered gold, ivory, skins, ebony, semi-precious stones, etc. with the Egyptians for food and other necessaries. Their huts were round and made of palm branches and reeds, and they had pointed roofs; whether they made mud bricks cannot be decided. Men and women of position wore skins of animals, but ordinary folk went naked. There is no evidence that the neolithic Nubians possessed the art of writing, but like many other later African peoples, they must have had some system of numbers, which they used in their bartering transactions.

The graves of the neolithic Egyptians have yielded up objects made of ivory, and beads made of semi-precious stones, and these

## NUBIA


indicate that the Nubians and the peoples who lived to the south of Nubia exchanged with each other the products of their respective countries. Such exchanges must have begun long before the dynastic kings began to reign in Egypt. And it seems to me that we are justified in assuming that trading caravans, the masters of which used asses as their beasts of burden, visited Nubia, and even Egypt, from such remote places in the south as those which we now call Dār Fūr and Kordofān, and from Fā-Zō'gli and Fā-Maka in the country of the Blue Nile. Such caravans naturally avoided the six Cataracts on the Nile, and caravans from Dār Fūr and Kordofān probably never saw the river until they reached Asyūt. Caravans from countries on the Blue Nile would, as in modern times, journey to Shendi, or Shindi, cross the Nile and then travel through the Bayūdah Desert northwards, either by recrossing the Nile at Marawi, and traversing the northern part of the Abu Hamad Desert, and so on to Aswān, or by one of the desert roads which avoided the Cataracts. Many of the caravans would not go as far as Egypt, but halt at places like Khartūm, Shendi, Berber, Marawi, Sūlb, Korosko, Aswān, Daraw, etc., where great markets have been held from time immemorial. The names of these market-places in early Nubian times are not known.

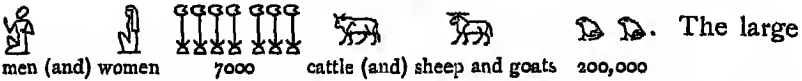
Of the relations which existed between the Nubian shēkhs and Nārmer and Āha, conquerors of Egypt, and its earliest dynastic kings, we know nothing, but that intercourse went on between Egypt and Nubia at this period for trading purposes is quite certain. There is a possibility that the people of Upper Egypt were descendants of settlers from the south-eastern parts of the Sūdān, and Naville and Maspero believed that the Egyptians and the people of Punt belonged to the same race. Punt  was a country near Somaliland, and many dynastic Egyptians regarded it as their original home. The long plaited beards of the Egyptian gods resemble those worn by the men of Punt, and certain funerary ceremonies were of Puntite origin.

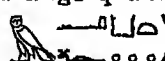
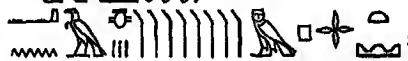

During the rule of the Ist and IIInd Dynasties the relations which existed between the Egyptians and Nubians seem to have been of a friendly character, and we hear of no fighting until the reign of Seneferu, the last king of the IIIrd or first king of the


# ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

IVth Dynasty. For reasons of which we know nothing this king made a great raid in Nubia, which is thus described on the Stele of Palermo<sup>1</sup>:


  
 Digging up of the Land Nehes (*i.e.* Land of the Blacks or Negroes)      The bringing in of prisoners living




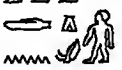





  
 men (and) women      7000      cattle (and) sheep and goats      200,000

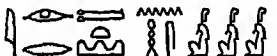
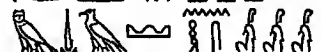
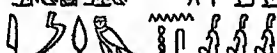
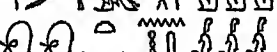
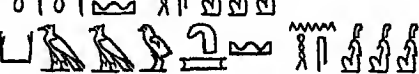
The large number of cattle and sheep and goats suggests that Seneferu penetrated Nubia as far as the Fourth Cataract at least, and it is quite possible that he collected the men and women from the region between Abu Hamad and Khartūm. He made no attempt to occupy Kash or to rule the peoples there; it is clear that his object pure and simple was loot but, strange to say, the annalist makes no mention of the bringing back of gold or any other product of the Sūdān. The immediate successors of Seneferu were far too much occupied with the building of the pyramids at Gīzah to make raids into Nubia, but it is possible that the Nubians sent gifts, which would be regarded as tribute, yearly to the kings of Egypt. The Stele of Palermo makes no mention of any country in the Sūdān until the 12th(?) year of the reign of Sahurā, a king of the Vth Dynasty, when a large quantity of copper ore was brought from Sinai (Māfkat ) and 80,000 pots of *anti*, *i.e.* myrrh, from Punt , and a large quantity of *tchām* , or "white gold." The kings of the XVIIth Dynasty made the coverings of the pyramidions of their great obelisks of the metal *tchām*, and it is probable that Sahurā decorated with it the Ben Stone, and other objects which he dedicated to Rā the Sun-god in his Sun-temple at Abusīr. Thothmes I and his successors who set up obelisks state carefully that they covered the pyramidions with casings of *tchām*, a fact which suggests that in so doing they were following an ancient precedent.



The statements on the Stele of Palermo show that the Egyptians were able to obtain large quantities of the products of Nubia under the Vth Dynasty. And the inscription of Hērkhuf 

<sup>1</sup> See Schafer, *Em Bruchstück altägyptischer Annalen*, Berlin, 1902.

## NUBIA

tells us that a keeper of the seal of the god  called Ba<sup>1</sup>-ur-ṭet  made his way as far to the south as the Land of the Spirits(?)  in the reign of King Assa, and brought back a dwarf *teng*  who knew how to dance the dance of the god  <sup>1</sup>. In the reign of Pepi I (VIth Dynasty) the Egyptians made war on the Amu, *i.e.* the peoples of the Eastern Desert "who lived on the sand"  , and Unā  was appointed Commander-in-chief of the great army of tens of thousands of men from all parts of Egypt and Nubia that was despatched against the enemy. Among the Nubians or Sūdānī folk were

- Blacks from Arthet 
- Blacks from Metcha 
- Blacks from Amam 
- Blacks from Uauat 
- Blacks from Kaau 


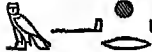

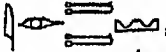



and men from the land of Themeh(?) , *i.e.* Libyans<sup>2</sup>. With these troops Una conducted five successful campaigns against the "dwellers on the sand," and it seems that they won victory for him over the rebels in the country of Shert...  in southern Palestine. The bravery and prowess of the "Black Battalions" was as great in the days of Field-Marshal Lord Kitchener as in the days of Una. The successful use of black troops by Una drew the attention of the kings of Egypt to Nubia and its peoples, and when Una was an old man the young king Merenrā paid a visit to the First Cataract, and held a durbar, which was attended by the chiefs of Uauat, Arthet, Amam and Metcha, who did homage to him; and it was they who provided the timber


<sup>1</sup> For the text see Sethe, *Urkunden*, I. p. 128.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 101.

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

for the lighters and barges which Una made to transport granite to Memphis. There is little doubt that Uauat was a part of Lower or Northern Nubia, but the positions of the other places mentioned above are not known.

Merenrā's interest in Nubia being great, he sent Ḥerkhuf to the south to open up the country. This distinguished man held many offices under the king, for being one of the feudal lords of Elephantine and Syene, and governor of the South, his authority over the Nubians was great. He was also a caravan master<sup>1</sup>, and it was through him that many of the products of Nubia entered Egypt under the VIth Dynasty; he was probably acquainted with the principal dialects of Nubia and the countries to the south of it, and could therefore deal with the nations without difficulty. He made four journeys of exploration to the south. On the first he took his father Ara  with him, and as he was absent seven months it is clear that Amam lay at a considerable distance from Egypt. He speaks as if he had performed the journey very quickly. On the second journey he travelled through the countries of Arthet, Makher , Terres  and Arthet , and was absent about eight months. And he brought back more gifts than any other caravan master before him had done. On the third journey he set out by another road, starting at the  on the road of the road of Uḥat . He found the chief of Amam setting out to smite the Libyans, but he succeeded in preventing a fight taking place. He started on his return journey with 300 asses laden with incense, ebony, skins, ivory, boomerangs, etc. When the chief of Arthet, Sēthu  and Uauat saw the size of his caravan, and its armed guards, he gave him bulls and sheep and goats, and provided him with guides to show him the way to the north. On the fourth journey Ḥerkhuf succeeded in reaching the Land of the Spirits, which must have been near the region where the pygmies lived, for he brought back one of these, which the king (Pepi II) commanded should be sent to him at Memphis. From

<sup>1</sup> mer aBi (?)   
10


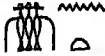

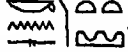
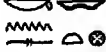



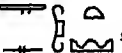

## NUBIA

the above facts it is clear that in the third millennium B.C. the caravans that were owned by the feudal lords of Elephantine traded with the peoples of the equatorial regions of Central Africa. These caravans had, no doubt, an official status, and it is very probable that kings and their officials had pecuniary interests in them.

With the collapse of the VIth Dynasty Egypt lost whatever power she had over Nubia, and there seems to be little doubt that after the death of Netaqert a revolution of a serious character took place. With the fall of the central power in Egypt, all social order was destroyed, and a period of anarchy took place during which the temples of the Old Kingdom were thrown down, the priesthoods robbed and driven out of their temples, and might alone was right. Whilst the struggle for sovereignty went on between the descendants of the royal house of Memphis (VIIth Dynasty) and the usurpers and impostors who are spoken of as the VIIIth Dynasty, Nubia had nothing to fear from Egypt, and her chiefs were relieved from the payment of "tribute" to her. Meanwhile the feudal lords of Henesu, or Herakleopolis, gradually extended their authority and consolidated their power, and Khati I, Khati II, Tefaba and others of them became the kings of the IXth and Xth Dynasties. In their inscriptions they speak of chastising the "Lands of the South," but as we know that their authority was disputed by the feudal lords of Siut (Cynopolis) and Thebes, it is impossible for them to have had any authority in Nubia. So from them Nubia had nothing to fear, and her people were free to traffic in all parts of the Sūdān, and had no need to fear that they would be called upon to pay dues and taxes on their caravans. They carried on a very profitable trade with the natives of Upper Egypt, and little by little established their markets at Daraw on the east bank of the Nile, and at Edfū and Asnā (Esneh) on the west bank. The armed guards who travelled with the caravans that traded with the countries to the south and west of the White Nile, and with the districts along the Blue Nile and the Island of Meroë, formed a body of men who were accustomed to fight and were to all intents and purposes soldiers. With the caravans from the south came also, even as was the case fifty years ago, "blacks," some of whom were slaves and others would-be settlers in Egypt.

The struggle for supremacy between the feudal lords of

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS


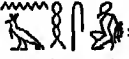
Herakleopolis and Siut, and the feudal lords of Thebes, was brought to an end by one Antefa, who broke the power of the northern lords, and became king of all Egypt. Several of his successors (XIth Dynasty) bore as the "Son-of-Rā" the name Mentuhetep, and one of the most powerful of these having forced his rule upon the country nearly as far as Memphis, turned his attention to the black peoples who lived between Thebes and Sunnu (Syene, Aswān). Naturally he wished to extend his dominions further to the south, and as naturally he was anxious to get possession of the trade routes and of all the markets in Lower Nubia. The Egyptian inscriptions suggest that the Nubian peoples whom we now know as "Barābarā" had taken possession of the Nile Valley between Syene and Thebes, *i.e.* had invaded Egyptian territory, and looted caravans in which the Government had an interest and also looted villages. Mentuhetep marched or sailed to the south, seized Syene, and started work in the granite quarries, and the inscriptions on the rocks there show that the Nubians acknowledged his overlordship. In a relief there the god Menu , a very ancient god of the Nile Valley, is seen standing upon fifteen long Nubian bows, which represent the fifteen barbarian countries of Nubia which he has given into the king's hand. The Egyptians of the Old Kingdom called Nubia "Khent" , a name which means the borderland on the south. A later name was "Kenset" , or , and the form , in which we have the bow  as a determinative, shows that the bow,  *petchet*, was the representative weapon of the peoples of Nubia. Later still Nubia was called "Sti"  or "Ta-sti" , the "land of the bow," and the Nubians were "Stiu" , *i.e.* "bowmen."

But though the Mentuheteps were masters of Nubia as far as the great market town now called Korosko, where caravans from all parts of Africa crossed the Nile, it seems that their authority did not extend very far to the south of this point. They needed the products of Punt, especially the famous aromatic gum called *ānti*, and probably because the ordinary desert route through the





## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

was then called Heh , marked the southern limit of Egypt, and here in the eighth year of his reign he set up a stele inscribed with an edict which prohibited any Nehen , i.e. "Black," from going down the river any further than this place, unless he was engaged in some authorized business. On the great frontier stelae which the king set up in the sixteenth year of his reign he says:

"I am the king, and what is said [by me] is done.

What my mind plans my heart carries out.

I seize like the crocodile, I crush mercilessly.

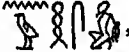
Words do not lie inactive in my heart.

The coward stands among his flatterers, but the compassion of his enemies reaches him not.

The king attacks his attacker; to him that is silent he is silent; his answer is in accordance with what has happened.

Paying no heed to an attack only strengthens the courage of the foe; he must be attacked with the violent attack of the crocodile.

He who runs away is vile and a poltroon; he who is defeated on his own land and reduced to slavery is not a man.

Thus is the Black , for he falls prostrate at the word of command, when attacked he jumps aside, when pursued he turns his back to the pursuer and runs away.

The Blacks lack bravery, they are timid and weak and cringing. My Majesty has seen them and has made no mistake about them.

I seized their women, I carried off their servants(?), I came to their wells, I lassoed their bulls, I reaped their crops, I set fire to their houses. This I swear by my own life and that of my father. I speak the truth, there is no doubt about the matter, and that which comes forth from my mouth cannot be contradicted.

The son of mine who maintaineth this boundary is indeed my son; the son who shall let it be set back, is not my son.

I have had a statue of myself made and set up on this boundary, not only that you might benefit thereby, but that you might fight for it."

## NUBIA

For the text see Lepsius, *Denkmäler*, Bd. II. Bl. 136, and Budge, *Egyptian Südan*, London, 1902, vol. I. p. 546 f.





With the view of avoiding the necessity of making annual raids into Nubia Usertsen III built a series of strong forts which began at Elephantine and ended near the head of the Third Cataract; the garrisons in them were Nubians, but the officers were Egyptians. Some authorities hold the view that he raided a portion of the Island of Meroe, and as he was still in the Südan in the nineteenth year of his reign this may well be so. Under his successor Amenemhat III the gold mines in Akita in the Eastern Desert (the modern Wādī 'Ulākī) passed wholly into the hands of the Egyptians; the fort which this king built at Dakkah was intended to protect the caravans that brought the gold from the mines to the Nile, whence it was sent by boat to Memphis via Syene.




During the struggle for supremacy which went on between the royal princes and usurpers and impostors who are mentioned in the King Lists as the kings of the XIIIth and XIVth Dynasties, some of the legitimate claimants to the Egyptian throne maintained their hold upon Nubia, and it would seem increased their power and authority in that country. Among these were the princes of Theban origin who bore the name of Sebekhetep, the greatest of these was

Khā-nefer-Rā Sebekhetep 

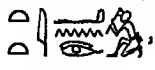
Two grey granite statues of this king, each about 24 feet long, are still to be seen on the Island of Argo, which lies a little to the south of Karmah, at the head of the Third Cataract. These statues stood one on each side of the door of a temple which was about 260 feet long and 163 feet wide, and close by, on the river bank, was a very large town and two huge mounds which in the days of Lepsius were called "Çarmān" and Dafāfah. In 1913-14 Reisner carried out extensive excavations for the Universities of Harvard and Boston, and discovered the remains of a Hyksos town and cemetery, and also the remains of an older cemetery which contained the tombs of the Egyptian officials who administered Nubia under the XIIth Dynasty. The large masses of Hyksos pottery which were unearthed prove that the town close by was a very large one, and show that it must have been one of the largest markets in the Südan. Thus it is clear that some of the Hyksos


## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

kings who formed the XVth and XVIth Dynasties occupied the Nubian province of Kash  or Kūsh, and there is little doubt that they levied tax and tribute on the people of one of the richest portions of the Nile Valley. But the Hyksos must have found very soon that the Nubians were not an easy people to exploit, and it is probable that they were compelled by attacks made on them by the natives to withdraw to the Delta some considerable time before they were expelled from Egypt by the Egyptians. The Hyksos deteriorated in Egypt, and they did so also in Nubia, and whilst they were still ruling Egypt nominally, a "Black" king established himself in the Delta. This king called himself "King of the South and North" , and had his name written in a cartouche thus  Neḥsi Rā, *i.e.* "the Black of Rā." He was certainly a foreigner as is shown by the sign  in his cartouche. Whether he was the son of a king of Egypt by a black woman or whether he was a pure "Black" is uncertain, but there is no doubt that he came from Nubia and established himself at Tanis in the Eastern Delta.


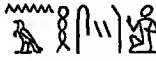


Whilst the struggle for supremacy was going on between the kings who ruled at Thebes and the Hyksos in Lower Egypt, Nubia regained its independence, and the Blacks forced their way into Upper Egypt and destroyed the "shrines of the gods of the South." As soon as Aāhmes (Amssis) I, the first king of the XVIIIth Dynasty, had expelled the Hyksos, he made a raid into Nubia, which he calls Khent-ḥen-nefer , and smote the peoples of Kenset, who had rebelled against him, *i.e.* had refused to pay tribute. Where the Antiu Stiu  lived is not clear, but they appear to have been people who lived among the rocky fastnesses of the Second and Third Cataracts. The king slew a great many of them, collected much "tribute" and returned to Egypt "in peace," *i.e.* well content with his "military demonstration." Hardly had he done so when another rebellion broke out in Nubia, and he was obliged to go to the south a second time. The rebellion was led by one Aati(?) , who seems

## NUBIA

to have led his men to the north and wrecked the temples which the kings of the XIIth Dynasty had built in their strong forts at Samnah, Kummah, Jazīrat al-Malik, Ma'tūkah, and perhaps Buhen (Wādī Halfah). The Egyptians captured him alive, but what they did with him is not known. The king's generals, Amasis son of Baba, and Amasis son of Pen-Nekheb, both of whom came from Al-kāb, received generous rewards, and grants of land in their native town. Almost immediately afterwards another rebellion, headed by one Tetaān , broke out, but he and all his followers were slain.

Amenhetep I, the successor of Amasis I, was obliged to go to Nubia to put down another rebellion, and when this was done he seems to have explored Upper Nubia and to have visited the Island of Meroé, where a wooden tablet bearing his name was found. In addition to the usual Sūdānī products, he collected many cattle, which probably came from the district now occupied by the tribes of the Baḳḳārah, or "cattle keepers." Amenhetep I realized the importance of the trade of Nubia for Egypt, and seeing that it was too great to leave in the hands of local inspectors and governors, he appointed an Egyptian officer, whose title was "Prince of Kcsh" , to administer the whole country of Nubia, which thus became a province of Egypt. The native Nubians and the wretched people who toiled in the gold mines were still dissatisfied, and when Amenhetep I died they rebelled and attempted to throw off the yoke of Egypt. The new king, Thothmes I, set out for the south in the first year of his reign, and his fleet of boats met the boats of the rebels as they were dropping down stream. A fierce fight took place, and the old soldier Amasis manœuvred in such a way that his boats fouled those of the enemy, and they were capsized in mid-stream, and the Egyptians attacked the rebels whilst they were in the water. The king "raged like a lion," and fought with his sailors, and succeeded in spearing the leader of the rebels, who fell headlong before the king. Thothmes considered the strategy of his general Amasis of such value on this occasion that he created him "Chief of the Sailors," *i.e.* Admiral of the Fleet. The king sailed down to Thebes with many prisoners, and with the dead body of the Nubian chief tied

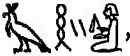

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

to the bows of his boat. In the second year of his reign Thothmes caused an inscription of 18 lines to be cut on a rock on the Island of Tombos, at the head of the Third Cataract, to commemorate his raid and his travels in Nubia. (For the text see Lepsius, *Denkmaler*, Bd. III. Bl. 5, and Sethe, *Urkunden*, iv. p. 82.) It is full of bombastic phrases and laudations of the king's might and power, but we need only refer to the parts of it which describe his operations in Nubia. This reads, "He has overthrown the chief of the Stiu . The Black  has been brought low, and is powerless in his (the king's) grip. He has brought together the boundaries of the two sides of his land; there exists not even a beggar among the woolly-headed Qetu  who came against him, not a solitary man is left of them. The Antiu Stiu, *i.e.* the Tioglodytes of Sti, have fallen by his slaughter, and lie on their sides throughout their districts. The stinking exudations of their bodies flood their valleys; what pours out (?) from their mouths(?) is like unto the rain flood of a storm ; the pickings upon them (*i.e.* the dead bodies) are too many for the birds [to eat there], they snap them up and carry them off to another place." The rest of the inscription says that the king is irresistible, that he penetrated districts which his ancestors did not even know of, still less see, that his fame fills not only heaven and earth but hell, that the whole earth is under his feet, and that even the Islands of the Ocean which surrounds the earth are his. As a plain historical fact the fort which he built at Tombos marked the limit of his kingdom on the south. On the death of Thothmes I the Nubian tribes promptly revolted, and the tribes on the east and west banks of the Nile raided the settlers in the Nile Valley who lived under Egypt's protection, and carried off their cattle.

When Thothmes II heard of this he sent his troops into Nubia, where they killed oxen, burnt the houses and crops, and captured alive the son of the chief of Kash. Then the Nubians brought their gifts, "smelled the earth," *i.e.* did homage, and the Egyptians returned to their country and the Nubians waited for their next opportunity to revolt. Under Queen Hatshepsut the Nubians



## NUBIA

recovered themselves, and there is no evidence that she raided their country; she preferred to send a mission to Punt, and to obtain the products of the Sūdān by peaceful means.

When her nephew and successor Thothmes III ascended the throne he found that all the countries who were tributaries to Egypt were in open revolt, and that the peaceful reign of Hatshepsut had made their peoples both bold and reckless. When the Nubians heard of the success of his arms in Western Asia, they did not wait for the king to come to their country to fetch their "tribute," but sent it of their own accord to Thebes. As Rekhmarā ruled Egypt wisely and effectively during the absences of Thothmes III on his expeditions in Western Asia, so Neḥi , the "Prince of Kash" and governor of the lands of the south, ruled Nubia, and made the peoples bring gifts to him regularly for transmission to Egypt. The woolly-headed Genbetu  of Punt sent bulls, oxen, calves and boat loads of ebony, ivory, skins of beasts, etc., and other countries, according to their wealth, followed their example. The gold mines of the Eastern Desert were regularly worked, and a series of temple-fortresses was built between Syene and Kash in connection with the gold trade from the south. Both Nubia and Egypt flourished as a result of the wise management of the trade routes and caravans during the reign of Thothmes III. Small revolts took place in "Kash the vile" from time to time, and of course caravans were pillaged at intervals, and then swift punishment was meted out by the Prince of Kash on the rebels and robbers. The policy followed by Thothmes III in Nubia seems to have been one of toleration of native religions and customs, and there is no doubt that all the various provinces in it enjoyed a considerable amount of independence. All that he asked the various chiefs and governors to do was to acknowledge his overlordship and to pay him tribute. In his reign the authority of Egypt was carried into the remotest parts of the Egyptian Sūdān, on the south and east, and if we may believe that his lists of tributary peoples and places are authentic the countries between the Atbarā and the Blue Nile recognized his power and the necessity of sending gifts to him. And he did more to civilize Nubia than any other king of Egypt. The Nubians saw

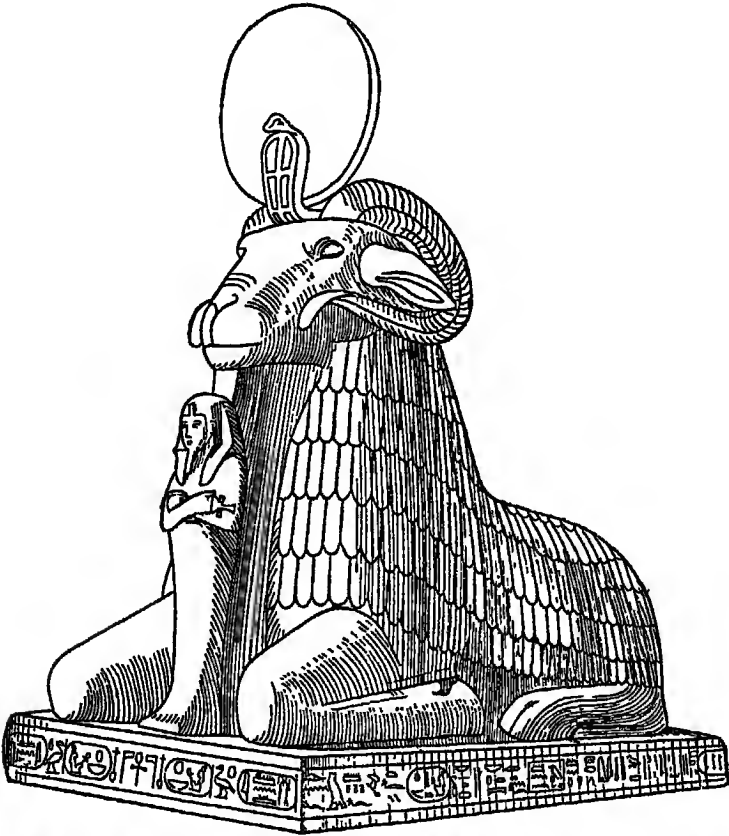
## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

the worship of Egyptian gods being performed, and Egyptian workmen engaged on their crafts, they learned new customs and manners from the Egyptian officials and their households, and they became acquainted with higher standards of living. The more intelligent of the young men who were employed by the Egyptian officers and officials not only gained some knowledge of the "tongue of Egypt," but, in the case of some of them, probably studied the, to them, mysterious characters which they saw on the walls of the temples, and learned to read and understand them. The caravan men reported all they had seen and heard in connection with the Egyptians, and the information thus acquired by their friends would be passed on from man to man *ad infinitum*. The merchants whose caravans traded with Nubia and the countries to the south were really more effective than the soldier in Egyptianizing the Sūdān.

We have seen that a town of much importance existed at the head of the Third Cataract under the XII Dynasty near the modern town of Karmah, but there was another town of equal or greater importance near Jabal Barkal, near the foot of the Fourth Cataract. This town was called Nept  or Nepita , and is clearly that to which classical writers give the name of Napata. There was a Nubian settlement here from time immemorial, and under the XVIIIth Dynasty Nept was regarded as the capital of the district. Caravans from the Blue Nile that came via Shendi halted here, and the market of Nept was one of the largest in Nubia. In these days the market is held at Tangassi, about eight miles down stream from the modern town of Marawi. The importance of Nept under the XVIIIth Dynasty is emphasized by the fact that when Amenhetep II brought back to Egypt the dead bodies of the seven chiefs whom he had killed in Syria, he sent one of them to Nubia with instructions that it was to be exposed on the walls of the town so that all men might see it, and so understand what was the fate of those who rebelled against the king of Egypt. Amenhetep II "extended the frontiers" of Egypt further to the south and made them to include a portion of the Island of Meroë. It seems that he founded a temple at Wād Ba Nagaa, about 70 miles north of, Khartūm, for Lepsius found there the two kneeling

## NUBIA

statues of this king which are now in the Berlin Museum. The king is represented offering two vases of wine, one in each hand, to some god, probably Amen. The statues are made of red Nubian limestone, and were therefore made by local sculptors.

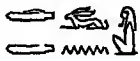




The Ram, sacred to the god Amen, having on his head the solar disk and cobra; between the forelegs is a figure of Amen-hotep III. This ram was made by that king and was placed by him in Het Khâ-em-Maât, *i.e.* the temple at Sûlb, in the Third Cataract. It was found at Jabal Barkal, near Marawi, whither it was carried probably by the later king Amen-asru. It is now in Berlin. From Lepsius, *Denkmäler*, Abth. iii. Bl. 91, and see the official *Verzeichniss* No. 7262.

The Egyptianizing of Nubia went on steadily under Thothmes IV, the successor of Amenhetep II, and it probably reached its maximum under his son Amenhetep III, the "Magnificent," B.C. 1412-1380. In the fifth year of his reign a rebellion broke out among the Nubians who lived to the south of Buhen (Wâdi



## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

Halfah), and he marched into the country, slew many rebels, cut off 312 hands, captured 740 prisoners, crushed the Antiu and returned with much spoil to Egypt. He claims in his inscriptions that the old Nubian gods Tetun  and Aahu  themselves helped him to win the victory over their people! But Amenhetep III was no lover of war, and he realized that it was better for the Egyptians to trade with the Nubians than to fight them. He therefore built a large and magnificent temple at Şülb on the west bank of the Nile, near one of the caravan markets in the Third Cataract, with pylons, sphinxes, obelisks and colonades. The temple was called Ḥot Khā-em-Maāt  and

was 578 feet long: it was dedicated to Amen and the king himself was worshipped in it as a god. It was not built to promulgate the cult of Amen among the Nubians, but to foster and encourage trade, and to provide a safe halting place for caravans as well as a market for their goods. At Saddēnga, not very far from the tomb of the famous Muḥammadan saint called "Gubbah (Ḳubbah) Salīm," Amenhetep III built a temple in honour of his chief wife Queen Tī, who was worshipped therein as a goddess. Under Amenhetep III Nubia prospered, and as long as he lived he did everything he could to promote the trade of the country. After his first fight with the Nubians in the early years of his reign we hear of no more wars or raids or "military demonstrations" by the Egyptians in their country. It is easy to understand how greatly the Nubians would appreciate a king who was a mighty hunter and a good sportsman, who was of a tolerant and generous disposition, and a lover of all the splendours and luxuries in which all the black and dark-skinned peoples of Africa take such intense delight.



The inscriptions show that the Nubians had many gods, *e.g.* Ṭeṭun, Aahu, Melul, who were honoured by the kings of Egypt, and they in turn were ready to honour and worship the Sun-god under the form of the ram-headed Amen. Great then must have been their surprise when the envoys of Amenhetep IV came into their country and tried to establish the cult of Aten in the temple of Gem-Aten, which they built in his honour, and preached the nothingness of Amen, in whose honour Amenhetep III had built

## NUBIA


the great temple at Şûlb. As the name of Amenhetep IV is found at Şûlb it is probable that Gem-Aten stood somewhere near it, or perhaps even in its precincts, but all trace of the building has disappeared. A large steatite scarab bearing on its base an inscription of Amenhetep IV was found at or near Saddēnga a few years ago and is now in the British Museum. But the cult of Aten never found favour in Nubia, and its people continued to worship Amen as their chief god until the collapse of the dynasty of Nubian kings and queens, whose capital was Nept or Napata, about B.C. 200.

The quarrel between Amenhetep IV and the priests of Amen affected Nubia very little, for the Egyptian governors in their various towns collected the tribute in the usual way, and if we may believe the statements on the walls of some of the Theban tombs, despatched it to Egypt. The restorer of the cult of Amen in Egypt dedicated a granite lion to the temple of Şûlb, or that of Jabal Barkal, and at one of these places built monuments to Amen-Rā, and a temple to Tem of Heliopolis and the Moon-god Aāh. The lion stating these facts is in the British Museum. Heremheb, the last king of the XVIIIth Dynasty, which ended about B.C. 1321, is credited with having chastised the "abominable" princes of Kesh, and is addressed as "Rā of the Nine Nations who fight with bow. Thy name is mighty in the land of Kesh, thy bellowings<sup>1</sup> are in their houses, and thy strength, O beneficent governor, has turned the mountains of the South into pillars of Pharaoh (*i.e.* Great House)." A "king's scribe" would naturally write such words, but it is very doubtful if there is any historical fact to support them. The power and influence of Egypt in Nubia during the last 50 years of the XVIIIth Dynasty decreased greatly, and the Egyptians never again held the country so securely and successfully as they did under Thothmes III, the wise warrior, and Amenhetep III, the merchant-king and "god" of the country.

Under the XIXth Dynasty, which lasted from B.C. 1321 to B.C. 1215, the gold mines in the Eastern Desert and in the far south were worked steadily and both Seti I and Rameses II greatly protected and developed the trade between Egypt and the countries south and east of Kharṭūm. In the bas-reliefs painted and sculptured

<sup>1</sup> Every king of Egypt was a "Mighty Bull"  .

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

during the reigns, these kings are represented slaying the "chiefs of the abominable Kesh," but this every king, from the time of the 1st Dynasty downwards, was supposed to do, and such representations formed part of the stock-scenes which every court painter and sculptor was expected to use. The reliefs and paintings in the little temple at Kalābshah illustrate the defeats of the Libyans and Nubians of Lower Nubia by Rameses II, and the great scenes found on the rock-hewn temple at Abu Simbel commemorate his triumphs at the Battle of Kadesh, but they supply us with very little information which is really historical. In the reign of Seti I the frontier town of Egypt on the south was Buhen (Wādī Halfah), a fact sufficiently indicated by the inscriptions cut on the walls of the temples which he built on the west side of the river. Beyond that point the rule of Egypt was not effective, and the temple of Rameses II at Abu Simbel emphasizes the fact. If Rameses had been really the master of Kash, he would have placed his temple of triumph further to the south. Under the XXth Dynasty which lasted about 75 years (B.C. 1205-1130), the Nubians suffered little from Egyptian raids, for the weak Pharaohs, Rameses III-XI, were chiefly occupied in maintaining themselves on their thrones. The military spirit which flourished in Egypt under the XVIIIth and XIXth Dynasties had died out, the "tribute" from Syria and Nubia was insufficient to meet the expenses of the Government and the demands of the priests of Amen-Rā, king of the gods, at Thebes. Under each new king the power of the priests increased, and before the end of the dynasty the high priest of Amen was *de facto* king of Egypt. When Rameses XI (or XII) died, Herher, high priest of Amen, usurped the throne and styled himself "King of the South and North" , and called himself "son of Rā" and "son of Amen": he also assumed a Horus name, and a Nebti name, like a legitimate Pharaoh. His rule was not acknowledged in Lower Egypt, and whilst he and his descendants were ruling at Thebes, another series of kings was ruling at Bubastis in the Delta. The priest kings and the Bubastite kings formed the XXIst Dynasty. Whilst the Theban priests and the Bubastite kings were struggling for supremacy the Nubians once again became independent. Through the religious fanaticism of Amenhetep IV, who was for a







## NUBIA

time high priest of Aten, Egypt lost her kingdom in Western Asia, and through the arrogance of the priests of Amen she lost Nubia, the Peninsula of Sinai and Palestine. The Egyptians and foreigners alike regarded the priests of Amen as usurpers, and ineffective usurpers at the best. The Thebaïd became the scene of anarchy, which the priests of Amen could not put down, and as they could not maintain themselves and the service of the god Amen, and could not help the people, they withdrew from Thebes, and it is thought betook themselves to Kash, or Upper Nubia, where they appear to have settled down. The rule of the priest kings lasted for about 121 years (B.C. 1100-979).

The Nubians, who had been gradually encroaching on the territories of Egypt, began to invade the country between Buhen and Syene, and waited for an opportunity to advance further to the north. What exactly happened in Thebes when the rule of the priests of Amen came to an end is not known. About this time, *i.e.* in the first half of the 10th century B.C., a Libyan tribe, whose great chief was called Buiuwawa, began to invade Egypt from the west, and about B.C. 947 Shashanq, the Shishak of the Bible, a descendant of that chief, made himself king in the Delta, and it is probable that his kinsmen began to occupy the Nubian country on the west bank of the Nile. The priests of Amen knew that they could never do battle successfully with the Libyans, or gain possession of the Delta, and as they were surrounded by a disaffected people, the only course open to them was to leave Thebes. This they did, and though positive information about their movements is lacking, there is sufficient ground for thinking that they withdrew to the south and made their way to Napata, where as priests of Amen-Rā, the Sun-god, whose worship the Nubians had adopted, they were welcomed by the people. The veneration of Egyptian civilization which the great kings of the XVIIIth Dynasty had laid over Nubia was still sufficiently firm to make their presence acceptable. The priests of Amen were learned men, and their knowledge and ability very soon enabled them to make themselves not only the recognized exponents of the will of the god Amen of Napata, and the directors of his worship, but the administrators of things temporal as well as spiritual. They inter-married with the Nubians and so consolidated their position in



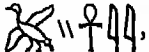
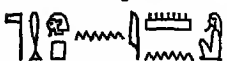
## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

Nubia. And we may be sure that they took every opportunity of encouraging the Nubians in thinking that the northern boundary of Nubia was at Siut, about 200 miles south of Memphis, and that Nubians ought to rule in the city, which was the original home of Amen of Napata, dweller in the "Holy Mountain" (Jabal Barkal).

Meanwhile the descendants of Shashanq I (XXIIInd Dynasty) were reigning at Bubastis in the Eastern Delta and making their rule more or less effective in Upper Egypt, especially in Thebes. Their rule in the Delta was disputed by the princes of Sais (XXIIIrd Dynasty) some of whom proclaimed themselves king and adopted the rank and titles of the old Pharaohs. The history of the period of the rule of the kings of Bubastis and the princes of Sais is difficult, because many of the most necessary facts are wanting; but we know that it lasted for about two hundred years, say from B.C. 947, when Shashanq I became king, to about B.C. 730, by which time a period of anarchy had begun. In the first half of the 8th century B.C. a Nubian prince or chieftian called Kashta



married an Egyptian lady (who was perhaps a princess of the house of Shashanq I) called Shepenupt, and established himself at Napata, whence he ruled Egypt for several years. His son Piānkhi lived and ruled at Napata, presumably under the guidance of the descendants of the priests of Amen who had migrated thither from Thebes. When Kashta died Piānkhi succeeded him, and it seems that many of the chiefs of towns, or kinglets, in the Delta and Middle Egypt acknowledged his rule.

The name Pānkhi, or Piānkhi, or Paiānkhi, or Paānkhi, , , , recalls that of the son of Herher, the first priest king, who himself became high priest of Amen , and it is possible that the son of Kashta was a descendant of his and was named after him. Be this as it may, Piānkhi of Napata regarded himself as king of Nubia and Egypt, and his soldiers were quartered in Egypt under the command of his generals, of whom the names of two are known, viz. Purema and Lamersekni.



# NUBIA

## THE NUBIAN CONQUEST OF EGYPT

The sole authority for the Nubian Conquest of Egypt is the hieroglyphic text of 159 lines which is found cut upon a massive block of basalt 5 feet 10 inches high, 6 feet wide, and 1 foot 4 inches thick, and was set up in the temple of Amen at Jabal Barkal by the Nubian king Piānkhi. On the obverse of the rounded top is sculptured a scene in which the king is represented receiving an address from Nemlet, the leader of the rebellion in Egypt, who is presenting to him a horse. At the feet of Piānkhi three kings are kneeling in submission, and behind the figures of Amen and the goddess Mut are five more kings, each with his name cut above him. The text opens with a statement by Piānkhi, who styles himself "King of the South and the North," and calls himself the beloved

of Amen . He says that he is an

emanation of the god, the living counterpart of Tem, and the son of Rā, and the work of the hands of this god. The stele is dated in the first month of the season Akhet (August or September) of the 21st year of the reign of Piānkhi, and having called upon his people to hearken to his narrative of the deeds which he has done more than his predecessors, he goes on to say that a messenger came [to Napata] and reported that Tafnekht, governor of Sais, had crushed the opposition of all the monarchs in the Delta, and was master of the country as far as Memphis. He had sailed up the Nile with his army, and town after town had submitted to him. The whole country was in a state of rebellion. The monarch of Herakleopolis had refused to submit to him, whereupon Tafnekht invested the town so closely that no one could either come out from it or go into it. When Piānkhi heard these things he smiled and his heart was glad, and he thought that there was no need for him to interfere because there were Nubian troops in Egypt, and two generals to direct operations. Therefore he did nothing.

Meanwhile the people in Egypt were getting more and more terrified, for it was clear that Tafnekht intended to sail up to Thebes and make himself king of all Egypt, and they sent messenger after messenger to Napata entreating Piānkhi not to 'keep silent,' *i.e.* remain inactive. At length one brought the news

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

that prince Nemlet had thrown in his lot with Tafnekht, and that they were levying tribute from the people. On this Piānkhi sent instructions to his generals Purema and Lamersekni to call up their troops, and to seize all the people, and cattle, and boats and to invest the Hermopolite nome so that the rebels' progress might be stopped. The generals carried out their instructions and reported the fact. Then Piānkhi sent an army down the river with detailed directions as to the methods of fighting and tactics that were to be adopted. He told them to remember that they were sent forth to fight by Amen, and that when they arrived in Thebes they were to bathe, array themselves in their finest apparel, and to sprinkle themselves with holy water and to bow down their heads to the ground before him. And they were to pray to him, saying,

We beseech thee to open up the way for us (*i.e.* go before us),

Let us fight under the shadow of thy sword.

If a babe were to be sent forth by thee


He would in striking his blow vanquish multitudes.

The soldiers returned a suitable answer and set out on their way.

Having worshipped Amen according to their orders, they re-embarked, and as they were sailing down the river they met a fleet of war boats sailing up, and as these were filled with the soldiers of Tafnekht a fierce fight took place in mid-stream. The Nubians were victorious, and they killed many of the enemy, and captured their boats and barges. A little later the Nubians attacked another body of Tafnekht's troops, and utterly defeated them and captured more boats, but several of the enemy managed to reach the west bank and escaped. On the following day at dawn the Nubians attacked another body of the enemy, and slew a large number of them and seized their horses, but again many managed to escape and they fled to the north. Nemlet, however, sailed up to Hermopolis where he took shelter, but the soldiers of Piānkhi who were encamped opposite to the city closed in upon it on all four sides, according to the instructions which they had received from Piānkhi. Then the Nubian generals sent a report to their king and expected him to be pleased, but so far from this being the case he "growled like a panther" over the report because his men had allowed some of the enemy to escape. This was too much for him to bear, and he took an oath by Amen that he would go to Egypt and destroy Tafnekht and all his works. Meanwhile the Nubians besieged and

## NUBIA

captured Oxyrhynchus, but still Piānkhi was not satisfied with them. They next attacked Ta-Tehen, which was strongly fortified and filled with soldiers. They built a battering ram and breached the walls of this city, and killed most of the people in it, and though Tafnekht's son was among the slain the king was not satisfied. And when Het-Benu was taken he was still dissatisfied.

On the ninth day of the first month of the season of Akhet Piānkhi sailed down the river to Thebes, and worshipped in the temple of Amen and celebrated the great Festival of the Apt, and then he went down to Hermopolis and besieged it. He drove to the camp in his chariot, and roundly cursed his soldiers for not having utterly destroyed the enemy. He threw up mounds of earth about the city, built stages for the slingers, and in three days the city capitulated. The chiefs of the city collected rich gifts of every kind and sent them out to Piānkhi with supplications for mercy, and the queen and all the royal ladies went in a body to Piānkhi's *harim* and entreated his wives to make intercession with their lord on behalf of Nemlet and his city. Nemlet himself came to the king with tribute of gold and silver and lapis lazuli, and in one hand he led a splendid horse and in the other he held a sistrum  made of gold and lapis lazuli. Nemlet showed his astuteness in bringing a horse as his personal offering, for Piānkhi loved a fine horse, and he was so pleased with this particular horse that he had a figure of it led by Nemlet cut upon his memorial stele.

Piānkhi paid no heed to the beautiful women of Nemlet's *harim*, but went on to inspect his stables, and when he learned that the brood mares and foals had been kept short of food, he became angry and told Nemlet that in starving his horses he had committed the worst possible offence, and that had he known this fact he would never have forgiven him. Piānkhi took possession of Nemlet's property and dedicated his granaries to Amen. The governor of Herakleopolis then submitted, and brought to the king gold and silver and a number of very fine horses. He did homage to Piānkhi, saying that he had been in hell, buried in the darkness, but now that the light of the king had fallen upon him his darkness was dissipated. Continuing his journey northwards, the towns of Lahūn, Mēdūm and Thettaui submitted to him, and being thus

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

master of the Fayyūm he went on without further opposition to Memphis. This city kept its gates closed, and continued to do so even after Piānkhi issued a proclamation to its people in which he promised, if they would let him sacrifice to Ptaḥ and Seker, he would leave them unharmed and continue his journey northwards. This promise they did not believe, and finding a few of Piānkhi's soldiers who were examining the walls of the city, they fell upon them and slew them to a man. The citizens of Memphis were encouraged to resist the Nubians by Tafnekht who had fled there, but having pointed out that their walls were able to protect them, instead of staying there to help them he mounted his horse and rode away.

Piānkhi discussed the situation with his generals who wished to throw up mounds and breach the walls with battering rams, but he decided to use other means for the reduction of Memphis, and the defeat of its 8000 soldiers. As it was the time of high Nile, and the waters of the river had reached to the walls of the city, he ordered his sailors to dash in with their boats among the ships that were moored to the quay, and to get as close to the walls as possible. When the Nubians did this they found that the bows of their boats projected over the walls into the city; from these the soldiers leaped down into the city and captured it forthwith. Piānkhi took care to protect the temples, and having performed ceremonies of purification, he offered up sacrifices to Ptaḥ and Seker. At this time various rebel chiefs tendered their submission, which was accepted. Piānkhi then crossed the Nile to Kher-āḥa, which stood near the modern Arab town of Fustāṭ, and sacrificed to Temu, and then he went on to Anu (Heliopolis) to worship Rā and his company of the gods who were there. He first bathed his face in the famous Sun-Well, 'Ain ash-shems, which still exists at Maṭariyah, and offered up a sacrifice of white oxen. He then went into the House of Rā, where he was received by the high priest, and he prayed many prayers there, and the high priest made supplications to the gods on his behalf. Piānkhi then purified himself with sprinklings of holy water and the burning of incense, and taking a bunch of flowers and a vessel of perfume in his hand, he mounted the steps of the shrine to look upon the face of the god, who was enclosed in a sort of tabernacle behind bolted doors. He


## NUBIA

drew the bolts, opened the folding doors, and saw Rā face to face; the god in permitting himself to be seen showed that he acknowledged Piānkhi to be the king of Egypt. Having adored the Morning and Evening Boats of Rā, he closed the doors of the tabernacle, and sealed them, and ordered the priests to admit no other king into the sanctuary. Peta-Bast and fifteen other princes, dukes and governors submitted when they saw that Piānkhi was acknowledged king by Rā, and were granted amnesty.

Meanwhile Tafnekht, the arch-rebel, was at large, and Piānkhi gave his men instructions to find him. When Tafnekht learned this fact, he threw down his forts, set fire to his house and treasury, and taking his soldiers with him fled to the town of Mest, the situation of which is unknown. Thither Piānkhi sent his soldiers led by the general Peta-Ast, and they killed every man they found there. As usual Tafnekht escaped, and it seems that he fled to some village among the marshes of the Delta near the sea; he must have found his position to be hopeless, for from his hiding place he sent a message to Piānkhi bearing his submission, and addressed the king thus: "I have not seen thy face during the days of shame, I cannot resist thy flame, the terror of thee hath overcome me. Thou art the War-god Nubt, and the War-god Menthu; mighty is thy arm. Thou hast not found me in any place where thy face was, and now I am among the Swamps of the Great Green Sea (*i.e.* Mediterranean) I am afraid of thy soul, for it works enmity against me. Has not thy heart been cooled by what thou hast done to me? Behold, I am a wretched man. Punish me not according to my evil deeds, weigh them not as in a scale with weights. Thrice hast thou punished me heavily. Leave the seed thou hast planted and thou wilt find it again, dig not up the plant when it is about to shoot. The terror of thy Ka is in my body, and the fear of thee is in my bones. I sit not in the beer house, no man brings me a harp [to play on], I only eat because I am hungry, and I only drink because I am thirsty. I have been in a state of misery ever since my name was heard by thee, and my head has lost its hair. My dress is rags, and thou hast brought the deepest misery upon me. Turn thy face to me, for behold during the past year even my Ka (*i.e.* spiritual double, or guardian angel) hath forsaken me. Purge thy servant of his rebellion, and accept my

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

possessions, gold, precious stones, my fine horses, and regard them as my indemnity. Send speedily a messenger to remove fear from my heart. I will go with him to the temple, and having purged myself of my rebellion will swear an oath of allegiance to thee by the God." In answer to this appeal Piānkhi sent his general Purema to the place where Tafnekht was, and when he had taken from him gold, and silver, and precious stones, and raiment, he went with him to the House of the God. There Tafnekht abjured his sin, and swore a solemn oath by the God that he would never disobey the king's commands, or oppose his instructions, or attack any of his officials, or refuse to do his bidding. Piānkhi knew that it was impossible for him to pursue Tafnekht among the Delta swamps, and he accepted his submission and granted him amnesty. Immediately after this other great monarchs in the Delta submitted, and Piānkhi was now master of all Egypt. The governors of lesser towns came to submit to him in person, but as they were uncircumcised and were fish eaters they were not admitted into the royal tent; "they stood in awe outside it, and their legs trembled like those of women." The Nubian kingdom now extended from Napata to the Mediterranean. Piānkhi never attempted to rule at Thebes, but having seen his boats loaded up with a vast quantity of spoil of all kinds, he sailed up the river and returned to Napata with a glad heart and much content. He rebuilt or enlarged the great temple of Amen-Rā of the "Holy Mountain," and the ruins of it show that it was over 500 feet long, and about 135 feet wide. No remains of any building by him have been found in Egypt. Of the rest of the acts of Piānkhi we know nothing, but it is probable that he devoted the last years of his life to extending his dominions in the south, and was content to let his son, or brother, Shabaka rule in Egypt. It is thought that Piānkhi reigned about 30 years; the name of his queen was Kenensat, and it was written



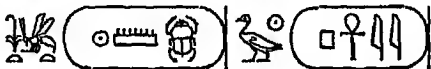
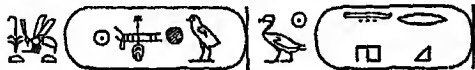

in a cartouche, . Piānkhi was buried in a pyramid tomb on the east bank of the Nile at Kurru, which is nearly opposite Tangassi, and is about 7 miles from the modern town of Marawi. The site chosen for his pyramid was a part of an ancient cemetery, in which some fifteen tombs were found, and Reisner, who excavated them, thinks that those who were buried in them

## NUBIA

were Piānkhi's ancestors. He is also of the opinion that **Kashta**, the founder of the family, was of Libyan origin. Near the tombs of the kings were those of several queens, in a group apart, and a number of tombs of horses. Each horse was buried in an upright position, and his head was turned towards the South.

### THE DYNASTY OF NUBIAN KINGS IN EGYPT

Manetho says that the XXVth Dynasty consisted of three Ethiopian kings, viz. Sabbakōn (8 years), Sevechus, his son (14 years), and Tarkos, or Tarakos (18 years); but the Egyptian inscriptions give the names of five Nubians who may be regarded as kings of Egypt, and these were:

1.  Neferkarā Shabaka.
2.  Ṭeṭkaurā Shabataka.
3.  Menkheperrā Pānkhi.
4.  Khunefertemrā Tahrq.
5.  Bakarā Tanutamēn.

Shabaka was, according to some, the son or brother of Piānkhi, and according to others the son of a certain Kashta, who usurped the throne at Thebes after Piānkhi had returned to Napata. Shabaka seems to have served in the army in the Delta for several years before he became king, and he was on friendly terms with Hoshea, king of Israel about B.C. 725. In 2 Kings xvii. 4 he is called "So." He incurred the displeasure of Sargon, king of Assyria (B.C. 722-705), who refers to him in his inscriptions as "Sib'i, the Tur-dan (*i.e.* commander-in-chief) of Pharaoh of Egypt." He sent rich gifts to Sargon, and so probably deferred the invasion of Egypt by the Assyrians. When he became king and was ruling at Thebes, he discovered that Bakenrenēf, the son of Tafnekht of Sais, was corresponding with the king of Assyria, he sailed down to the Delta and seized him and burnt him alive. Bakenrenēf was the

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

only king of the XXIVth Dynasty according to Manetho. He mixed himself up in the rebellion of Hezekiah and other kings in Palestine, and sent an army against the Assyrians on their behalf; but Tirhākāh, the Egyptian general, and his troops were destroyed by Sennacherib (B.C. 705-681) at the battle of Eltekeh. The sister of Shabaka, Amenartas, was high priestess of Amen, an arrangement which was effected by Piānkhi. Shabaka reigned about 15 years (B.C. 715-700) and was buried in a pyramid tomb at Kurru, near that of Piānkhi.

Shabataka's reign of about 10 years was unimportant and his name is not mentioned in the inscriptions in Nubia. He seems to have had dealings with the disaffected kings in Palestine, and to have wished to send an army to help them against the Assyrians. Whilst he ruled at Thebes, Taharq, the Tirhākāh of the Bible, ruled at Napata. For some reason unknown to us, Taharq was dissatisfied with Shabataka's methods in Egypt, and when he heard that the Assyrians had defeated him, he set out with an army from Napata for Egypt, and when he arrived in the Delta he seized Shabataka and put him to death. The body of Shabataka was taken to Nubia and buried in a pyramid tomb at Kurru.

Of the short and unimportant reign of Menkheperā Pānkhi nothing is known, but from a stele of his in Paris it is clear that he claimed to be the son of Amen and Mut and that he drew up for himself a full titularial like the old Pharaohs.

Taharq succeeded to the throne of Napata because his mother Akaluka was a kinswoman of some of the descendants of the priest kings of Thebes. He was crowned king both at Tanis and Thebes about B.C. 689, and he had his mother brought from Napata to witness the coronation ceremonies; he reigned about 26 years. He built a temple with a rock-hewn sanctuary at Jabal Barkal, and repaired or rebuilt some of the older temples in the "Holy Mountain." At Thebes he repaired the temple of Mut, and built a temple to Osiris Ptaḥ, and a pylon at Madīnat Habū; at Tanis also he built a small temple. His relations with the kings of Palestine were friendly, and for the first eight or nine years of his reign the Assyrians caused him no trouble, for Sennacherib, king of Assyria (B.C. 705-681), did not attempt to invade Egypt, although he knew that Taharq was more or less in sympathy with their rebellion.






RUINS OF A MUD BRICK TEMPLE BUILT BY TIRHAKAH AT SAMNA IN THE SECOND CATARACT. THE TEMPLE WAS RECTANGULAR AND WAS 75 FEET LONG AND 41 FEET WIDE. IT CONSISTED OF A COURT WITH SIX NUBIAN-SANDSTONE PILLARS, AND A HALL IN THE CENTRE OF WHICH WAS THE SANCTUARY CONTAINING THE ALTAR. THE TEMPLE HAD ONLY ONE DOOR AND WAS ENTERED AT THE NORTHERN END. THE ABOVE ILLUSTRATION SHOWS A PORTION OF THE VAULTED ROOF, THE REMAINS OF A PILLAR, THE ALTAR, AND THE STONE DOOR-JAMBES



## NUBIA

Almost as soon as Esarhaddon became king (B.C. 681-668), he besieged Tyre, and a year or two later set out to invade Egypt. But he failed in his first attempt, for his army, like the army of Cambyses, was destroyed by a mighty sand-storm (*habûb*) in the desert. His second attempt succeeded, and he defeated without difficulty the army which Taharq had collected on his north-east frontier to resist Esarhaddon's progress. Taharq fled to Memphis with the remnant of his army, and fortified it to the best of his ability. The Assyrians pursued him, and took Memphis and put its garrison to the sword. Taharq escaped and fled to the South, but Esarhaddon did not pursue him. The monarchs of the principal cities in the Delta made submission to him; and he appointed twenty of them to rule as his vassals, each in his own city. This done, he returned to Assyria, where he stayed for a year, and then set out on another expedition to Egypt; but he fell sick and died on the way (B.C. 608).


Thereupon Taharq reappeared in the Delta and expelled all the governors who had been appointed by Esarhaddon, and killed the little Assyrian garrisons that he had left in the twenty towns, and then went to Memphis where he declared himself to be king of all Egypt. The news of these high-handed and foolish proceedings was quickly carried to Ashurbanipal (B.C. 668-626), the son and successor of Esarhaddon, and when he learned the extent of the "sin" of Taharq (in Assyrian TARKÛ | , his "liver became hot," and he was filled with fury. He collected his army rapidly and set out for Egypt. He marched into Syria and the twenty-two kings on the sea-coast submitted to him, and he marched quickly to Karbaniti, where Taharq had drawn up his army in battle array. The Egyptians were routed with great slaughter, and when Taharq, who had remained in Memphis, heard this, he fled to Thebes. Ashurbanipal summoned the governors whom his father had appointed to his presence, and reappointed several of them to the cities which they had formerly ruled; in a few cases he appointed men selected by himself. Ashurbanipal returned to Nineveh with great spoil. After he had left the country Sharru-ludari an Assyrian of Tanis, Paqruru of Pa-Sept, and Nekau of Sais, sent despatches to Taharq inviting him to make a pact with them and help them to destroy the Assyrians who had been left in

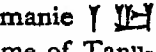
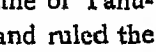
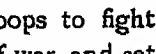
## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

Egypt. But some of the Assyrian governors managed to intercept the despatches, and the conspiracy was discovered, and reported in Nineveh. Ashurbanipal sent a large army to Egypt, and the rebellion was put down with an iron hand. Nekau and Sharruludari were bound in fetters and sent to Nineveh; the latter was burned alive and the former was loaded with gifts and sent back to Egypt, and his son, to whom the Assyrian name of Nabushezib-anni was given, was appointed governor of Athribis. Of the subsequent career of Taharq we know nothing, but the Assyrian annalist wrote, "Tarḳū fled to Kūsh. The terror of the soldiers of Ashur, my lord, overwhelmed him, and he went to his dark doom." Taharq was buried in a pyramid tomb at Nūri, which was excavated by the Boston-Harvard Expedition in 1917; specimens of his gigantic *ushabtiu* figures are to be seen in the British Museum. In his inscriptions he claims to have conquered the land of the Kheta (Hittites) and Assyria, and the Eastern Deserts, and it is probably by such false statements that Strabo was deceived, and so declared that "Tearko, the Ethiopian," was a great traveller (I. 3. 21), and that he had visited Europe (XV. 1. 6). He had of course seen the Mediterranean, but there is no proof extant that he crossed it.


During the last few years of his reign, Taharq associated in the rule of the kingdom with a Nubian prince called Tanutamem, a devotee of Amen. According to the text on a stele found at Jabal Barkal, this prince had a dream one night in which he saw two snakes, or cobras, one on his right hand and one on his left. He applied for an interpretation of the dream to a magician who told him that the cobras symbolized the lands of the South and the North, of which he was to become the king, and that he should bind these symbols of sovereignty on his brow. He accepted this interpretation, and went forth and was proclaimed king by 1,100,000 men. Having made an offering of 26 oxen, 40 measures of beer, and 100 ostrich feathers to the temple of Napata, he set out for the North. He made offerings to Khnemu-Rā and Ḥāpi, the Nile-god, at Syene, and he was acknowledged king at Thebes. At Memphis his reception was of a mixed character, for some greeted him joyfully, and others resisted his entry into the city. At length he killed all those who opposed him, and entered the city and made offerings to Ptaḥ and Seker. The people who

## NUBIA

resisted his entry into Memphis were probably soldiers from the Assyrian garrisons in the Delta. But having propitiated the priesthood of Ptah, and assumed the kingship of the country, he set out to fight and crush the "governors of the North." These, however, were not inclined to engage in battles in the open with forces of unknown strength, and they withdrew into their garrisons, which Tanutamem seems to have regarded as impregnable. At any rate he made no attempt to throw up mounds around them, and to breach their walls with battering rams, but sat down outside the garrison cities and waited "many days" for their occupants to come out and fight. When he saw that they had no intention of doing this he returned to Memphis and sat down in his palace and tried to think out a plan for dislodging the governors of the Delta from their strongholds by means of the Nubian archers whom he had brought with him. After a time, Paqrer  (i.e. the Frog), governor of Pa-Sept, or Phacusa, who was one of the leaders of the conspiracy which the Assyrians had crushed a few years earlier, appeared with some other governors from the Eastern Delta, and discussed matters with him, and came to some sort of an understanding with him. What exactly this was is not known, but it seems as if they proposed to bribe him to return to his own country. For after they had been generously entertained with "bread and beer and all good things," they returned to their towns and came back to Memphis with the gifts, which they had offered him. Tanutamem accepted these and then, presumably, departed to the South and returned to Napata.

Such is the story which Tanutamem caused to be cut on his memorial stele, but in the Annals of Ashurbanipal we find a very different account. Having said that Taharq went to his "dark doom," Ashurbanipal goes on to say that "Tandamanie   , which is the Assyrian form of the name of Tanutamem, the son of Taharq's sister sat on his throne and ruled the country. He fortified Thebes, and collected his troops to fight against my army, and he brought out his munitions of war, and set out on the road [to the North]. In my second campaign I set out on the road to Egypt and Kūsh. Tandamanie heard of the progress of my expedition, and that I had invaded the frontiers of Egypt.


## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS


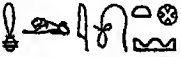



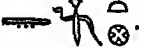

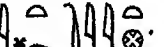

He left Memphis and to save his life fled to Thebes. The kings, and prefects and governors whom I had established in Egypt, came into my presence and kissed my feet. I set out to pursue Tandamanie, and marched to the fortified city of Thebes; he saw that my mighty army was advancing and he left Thebes and fled to Kipkip, . Through my trust in Ashur and Ishtar, my hands captured all Thebes." Ashurbanipal looted the city in characteristic fashion, and collected an indescribable amount of spoil among which were two gold, richly carved pillars, or obelisks, which weighed about two and a half tons and would be worth over £300,000 of our money. All this he took to Nineveh, where he arrived safely. Another version given on tablet K 2675 says that the Assyrians overthrew Tandamanie on the battlefield and routed his army, and that he was obliged to flee by himself to his capital Thebes. The march to Thebes, a distance of about 450 miles, occupied the Assyrian army 40 days, for the going being difficult, the soldiers only travelled about 12 miles per day. In this version of the pursuit of Tandamanie no mention is made of the gold pillars or obelisks. The circumstances of the death of Tandamanie are unknown, but he was buried in a pyramid tomb, in the old cemetery at Kurru in which Piānkhi, Shabaka, and Shabataka were buried. The sacking of Thebes took place about B.C. 661, and it was the most serious calamity that had ever befallen the city. It says much for the tact and diplomacy of Mentemhat, the governor of Thebes, that Ashurbanipal did not raze all the temples to the ground. The destruction of Thebes was due to the evil counsels of the priests of Amen at Napata. Their ancestors had reduced Thebes and all Upper Egypt to poverty and misery because they insisted that the high priest of Amen was the rightful ruler of Egypt. Shashanq I made his kinsman high priest of Amen, but the Nubians did better, and substituted a high priestess for the high priest. The Nubians might have ruled Egypt undisturbed if they had not been so unwise as to interfere in the affairs of Palestine and Syria, whereby they brought upon themselves the wrath of the kings of Assyria. The Assyrians swept away the Nubian soldiers before them as if they were chaff, and in every battle their kings were defeated. Shabaka ran away from Sargon, Taharq ran away from Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal, and

## NUBIA

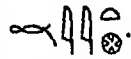
Tanutamen ran away from Ashurbanipal. It was reserved for the Nubian converts and dupes of the priests of Amen to bring upon Thebes such wholesale destruction, and ruin so awful that the prophet Nahum held it up as an example of the calamity which he prophesied would come upon Assyria, and which actually did come when Nineveh fell B.C. 612.

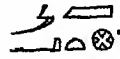
### THE LATER NUBIAN KINGS OF NAPATA

The next king of Egypt was Psemthek, or Psammetichus I, the founder of the XXVIth Dynasty, which lasted from B.C. 663 to the Persian conquest of the country B.C. 525. He was the son of Nekau, the monarch or governor of Sais, and was appointed governor of Athribis by Ashurbanipal, who gave him the name of "Nabū-shezib-anni," and named his city "Limir-Patesi-Ashur." After the flight of Tanutamén Psemthek extended his authority over the Delta, and afterwards, little by little, to Thebes, where he reigned as King of all Egypt. As the policy of himself and his successors was to employ Greek and other mercenaries, he had no need to import Nubians into his army, and thus the kings of Napata were left to follow their own devices. We do not know what took place in that city after the death of Tanutamén, or who succeeded him. The names of several kings who must have reigned over Nubia after him have been collected from the ruins of the temples at Jabal Barkal and other monuments, but at present these cannot be placed in chronological order. The Egyptians in the later times regarded Nubia as a *nome*, Ta-stitt , which they divided into thirteen districts called :


1. Peh-Qennes , *i.e.* the southern end of the Island of Meroé.
2. Marau , *i.e.* Meroe, Μερὸν.
3. Nap , *i.e.* Napata, Νάπατα.
4. Petenher .
5. Panebs  Πνούψ (?).
6. Tauatch .
7. Behen  Βόων (?).
8. Atefti .
9. Nehau .

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS






10. Mehi 

11. Maā 

12. Bak 




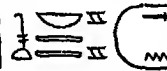


13. Hetkhent 

This division of the county was probably very ancient, but whether it was preserved under the late Nubian kings is doubtful.

In 1915-17 Reisner, Director of the Harvard-Boston Expedition into Nubia, excavated several of the pyramid fields at Napata and in the neighbourhood, and at Nūri he found the tombs of Taharq and about nineteen other Nubian kings. From the objects which he found in the tombs he was able to draw up a list of the names and titles of these kings, and these he has published in what he believes to be chronological order. Some of these names were known to Egyptologists before he made his discovery, but many were not, and as all are instructive they are reproduced below: but it must be remembered that the sequence is tentative. Most of the kings arrogated to themselves the old Egyptian titles, e.g.  King of the South and the North,  strictly speaking "King of the South,"  Lord of the Two Lands (*i.e.* Egypt),  Lord of Crowns, etc., and each called himself "son of Rā" , and nearly every one had a premen as well as a nomen.

    Seneferrā Pānkhi.

    Akhukarā Atlenersa.

      Beneficent god, Lord of the Two Lands, Sekheperenrā, King, Lord of the Two Lands, Senkaamenseken.


     Ankhkarā Anlamen.

    Merkarā Aspelta.


     Uatchkarā Amtleq.



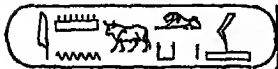
NUBIA


 Sekhemkarā Malneqen.

 Neferkarā Nelmai (?).


   
 Netaklabathamen.


 Kalgamen(?).

 Kargamen(?).

 Setepkarā   
 Astabarqamen.

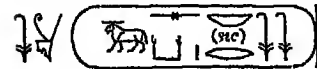
 Segerḥtai   
 Asāsnuaq(?).

 Nasakhmat(?).

 Kheperkarā   
 Maluibamen(?).


 Talakhamen.

 Neferabrā   
 Herinutarekamen.

 Baskakeren(?).

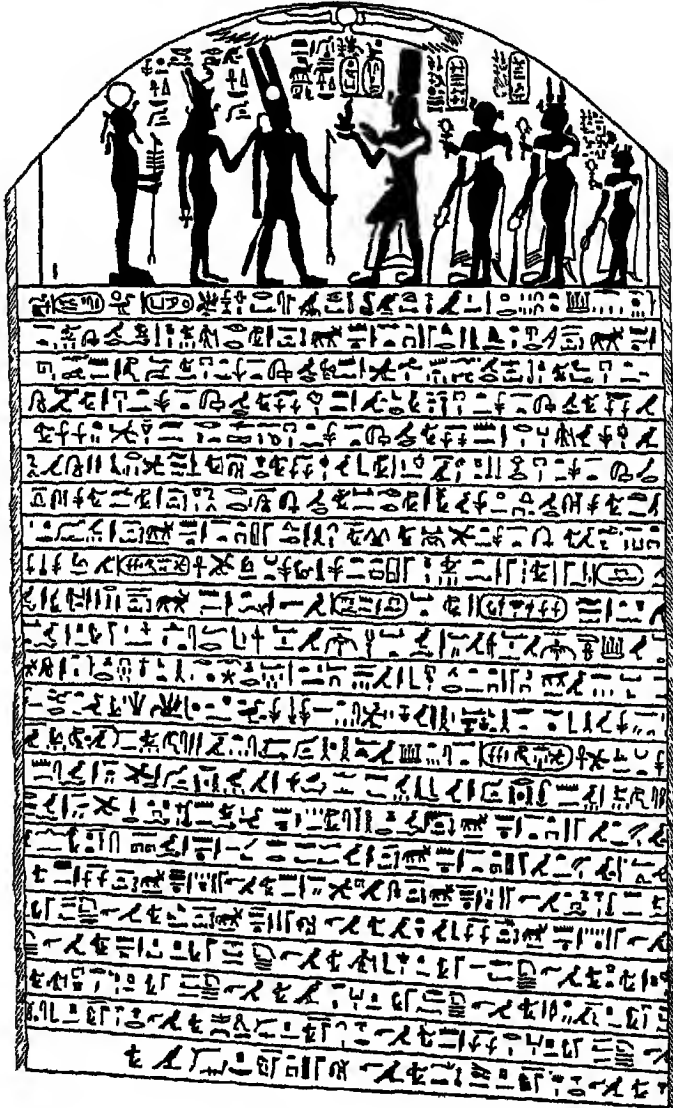
 Hersaatēf   
 Sameriamen.

 Akherthen   
 Pānkhaler(?).

 Ānkhkarā Nastasen.

# ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

The names of Atlenersa and Senkaamenseken are found on altars which Lepsius discovered at Jabal Barkal (see *Denkmäler*,




Stele inscribed with an account of the dedication of gifts to the temple of Amen-Rē at Napata by King Aspelta. Found at Jabal Barkal.

V. 15 *a* and *b*), and a statue from the same place gives us the prenomen and nomen of Amtleq. Nothing is known of the deeds

## NUBIA

of these kings, but their inscriptions suggest that they reigned soon after Taharq. The principal monuments of the reign of Merkarā Aspelta are two stelae which describe the coronation of this king and the dedication of gifts to the temple of Amen-Rā of Napata by his mother. The "Coronation Stele" is in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, and the stele of the dedication of gifts in the Louvre. Both were found at Jabal Barkal. In the sculptured relief on the Coronation Stele the king is seen kneeling at the feet of the ram-headed Amen, who tells the king that he has established his sovereignty as firmly as heaven on its four pillars. Behind the god stands the goddess Mut, and in front of the king stands his mother Nselra holding a sistrum in each hand. The names of the king and his mother have been obliterated, but they can be restored from the stele of dedication. The text says that the soldiers were assembled in the Holy Mountain of Ṭeṭun, an ancient god of Nubia, together with twenty-four officers of state, viz. six captains of the army, six priests who carried seals, six scribes, and six chancellors of the palace. They had assembled to elect a king, but who was to be that king they knew not; in their difficulty they decided to lay the matter before Rā, to whose temple they went. There they found the prophets and priests waiting for them. The priests sprinkled the people with holy water, and burnt incense, and then prayed to Amen to choose a king for them. The princes were paraded before the god, but he selected none of them; but when Aspelta was brought before him the god indicated that he was to be king. His mother was queen of Kash, his grandmother was a priestess of Amen-Rā. When Amen had chosen all present fell on their bellies and did homage to Aspelta as the son of Amen-Rā and their king. Then Aspelta prayed to Amen for strength and guidance. And when Amen had promised to give the king both, Aspelta put on the royal crown, and took the sceptre in his hand, and prayed again and went out to the people who greeted him with cries of joy. Aspelta made offerings to the gods, and decreed that a number of festivals were to be celebrated annually, and gave 140 vessels of beer to the god and his priests.

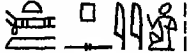
In the relief on the Stele of Dedication the king is seen presenting a figure of the goddess Maāt (*i.e.* Truth)  to Amen,

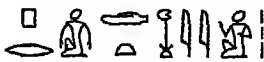
## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

who is in the form of a man wearing the solar disk and plumes. Behind the god stands Mut and Khensu, the second and third members of his triad, and behind the king stand his mother, his wife and his sister, each of whom is pouring out a libation from a vase in her right hand, and holding a sistrum in her left. Each of the ladies is steatopygous, and their figures resemble those of the queens who are represented on the walls of the Chapels at Bagrawir on the Island of Meroé. The text states that on the 24th day of the fourth month of the season Akhet in the third year of the reign of Aspelta, his queen came to the temple of Amen of Napata, and in the presence of certain scribes, chancellors and overseers, eleven officials in all, she contracted with the god to give him 15 loaves, 10 of one sort and 5 of another, daily, and 15 vessels of beer every month, and 3 oxen every year, and on festival days she promised to give 3 vessels of beer. The queen undertook to maintain this endowment during her lifetime, and her children and grandchildren were to do so after her death. Every descendant of hers who carried out her wishes would have a son to succeed him, but anyone who diminished the endowment would be smitten by the sword of Amen and the fire of the terrible goddess of the desert Sekhmit. There were present to accept the endowment on behalf of the god, the 2nd, 3rd and 4th prophets of Amen, the scribe of Amen, seven libationer priests, three directors and the scribe of the temple.

It seems certain that as the direct descendants of the priests of Amen who migrated from Thebes to Nubia in the 9th century B.C. became fewer and fewer, the officers of the temple of Amen were recruited from the families of purely Nubian chiefs. Such men would naturally see no reason why they should not observe their native manners and customs, even though they might not be in accordance with the rule of life prescribed by the priests of Amen. A large stele which was found at Jabal Barkal and is now in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, shows that certain people in Napata, who were supported by a section of the priesthood of the temple of Amen, tried to introduce a new element into the worship of the god, and that Amen was called upon to give a ruling in the matter. According to Maspero and others, an attempt was made to abolish the custom of eating burnt offerings, for certain men wished to eat them raw. That it has always been the custom of some of the

## NUBIA

peoples in the Eastern Sūdān is well known. The king, who was probably Aspelta, found out that certain of the priesthood of Amen were in favour of this view, and in the second year of his reign he issued an edict declaring that the practice was an abomination of Amen. Dr Schafer thought that the text on the stele could not be made to bear this meaning, and in it he sees nothing but a statement to the effect that certain members of the priesthood had joined in an attempt to murder a man in the temple of Amen. Because these men, whose names are given in the hieroglyphs 



TEM PESIU PER TET KHAIU, had tried to


do a thing which would have defiled the temple of Amen, and which the god had not commanded to be done, the king decreed that they should not be allowed to enter the temple again. He further warned every servant and libationer of the god that if they committed any offence whatsoever in the temple, the god would smite them, and would not allow them to walk on the earth, and would not permit their heirs to live. For discussions on both views the reader is referred to *Revue Arch.*, N.S. tom. II. p. 329 ff., Paris, 1871; *Bibl. Égyptologique*, tom. VII. p. 71; and *Kto*, Bd. VI. p. 287 ff. A careful copy of the hieroglyphic text and an English translation will be found in Sethe, *Urkunden*, III. p. 108 ff., and Budge, *Annals of Nubian Kings*, London, 1912, p. ci ff.

The reigns of the kings whose names follow after the name of Aspelta in the list given above seem to have been unimportant, and nothing is known about them. If these kings made monuments recording their wars, etc they have been destroyed, and no records of them remain except those which are found on the funerary objects in their tomb whence their names are taken. Of the last three kings in the list monuments exist, and these may now be described.

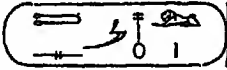
### THE STELE OF SAMERIAMEN HERSATEF

This stele was found at Jabal Barkal and is now in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo; there is a cast of it in the British Museum (No. 815 [1125]). On the upper rounded part of the obverse is a sculptural relief in which the king is seen presenting a necklace and a pectoral to each of the two forms of Amen-Rā, who as the great

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

god of Thebes had the head of a man and as the god of the Holy Mountain the head of the Nubian ram with horns curling down by his face. The king wears a close fitting cap, with a fillet, and the uraei of the South and North  are fastened over his forehead.

His tunic is held in position by a belt from which hangs an animal's tail. Behind one figure of the king stands "the royal mother, royal

sister, Queen of Kash,  Thesmaru, or Thesmaneferru (?)" ; and behind the other stands "the royal sister, great wife

Behtalis (?)"  .

The royal mother wears a close fitting cap surmounted by the uraeus of royalty, and the "great wife" wears the vulture headdress, with the disk, horns and plumes. Each lady holds a sistrum in one hand and pours out a libation with the other. The god says, "I give unto thee life and all serenity, all stability, all health, and all joy of heart. I give unto thee the years of Eternity and Everlastingness." The stele is dated in the 33rd year of the king's reign, and it is clear that Hersatef was a strong king, that his soldiers rejoiced in his numerous expeditions, and that the spoil which he brought back from them and shared with Amen-Rā made the priesthood of that god content. In respect of the number of his raids, and the area of his conquests he may well be compared with the great warrior Pharaohs, and styled the Thothmes III of Nubia and the Sūdān. The text, after enumerating the king's names and titles, goes on to say that before Hersatef became king a vision was given to him. In it he saw Amen of Napata come to him, and look at him with kindly eyes, and bind the crown of Nubia on his head, and tell him to go into his temple in Napata. Hersatef was afraid, and asked a sage to interpret the dream, and the old man told him, "Let thy hands be active ; build and build strongly." They (the text does not say who) took him into the presence of Amen, and told him "to ask the god for the crown of the Land of the Blacks." The god replied, saying: "The crown has been given to thee. I will give thee the Four Quarters of the earth, good water, the sky and abundant rains. I will put thine enemies under thy sandals, no king shall march against thee. He who

## NUBIA

comes to attack thee I see his arm and legs drowned in the Great Nile." The king adds that Amen gave him these things. He then journeyed to the temples of Amen in Gem-Aten and Per-Nebes, and the temple of Bast in Tart , and told the gods therein what Amen of Napata had said. This means that Hersatef went to the three other provinces of Nubia to be recognized as king by their priesthoods. He rebuilt a temple in Tara of the South, and decorated the temple of Amen of Napata with gold, and built a new sanctuary (?) of acacia wood which he had brought from Arkaret, and overlaid them with gold. He then made gold rings for Amen, and figures of gods, rams' heads, beads, etc. For the sanctuary he made vessels of silver and bronze, lampstands, censers, shovels, etc., and he gave to the god much myrrh, incense and honey. He rebuilt the "temple of one thousand years"

, with a colonnade, a byre for cattle, and to Amen he gave 500 oxen, and 100 slaves, fifty men and fifty women, and he said to the god, "Could a list be made of the things that I gave thee? I gave thee whatever I was asked to give; they gave me the order [and I gave]." The expeditions of the king were as follows:

Year 2. Raid on Rehrehsa ; great slaughter of the enemy.

Year 3. Raid on Mett ; great slaughter of the enemy.


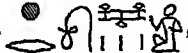
Year 5. Second raid on Mett, and fight at the city of Neruar ; overthrow of the chief of Arga

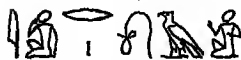
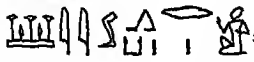
Year 6. Third raid on Mett, and capture of bulls, cows, asses, sheep, goats, slaves male and female, and gold. The prince sent his submission, saying, "Thou art my god, I am thy servant, I am a woman." Gift of cattle to Amen.

Year 11. Raid on Aqna ('Akum?) and capture of the city, whose chiefs Barga and Sa-Amen had fled to Syene. Kasau the Nubian general slew both fugitives and killed many men.

Year 16. Raid on Mekheti(?), with horsemen and bowmen; defeat of the enemy after a great fight, and looting of cattle.

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

Year 18. Raid on Barua (Meroe) ; utter defeat of its chief Kherua , and great slaughter of the enemy.


Year 23. Second raid on Rehrehsa, and slaughter of Arua , chief of the district of Meroë. Defeat of Shaikaru , with whom Hersatuf had made a treaty.

Year 35. Second raid on Mekheti. The enemy were killed to a man, and the Nubians carried off everything in the city.


The text ends with an account of further building operations of the king, and a list of the festivals at which Osiris, Isis, Horus, and Anḥer appeared in the cities of Meroe, Mertet, Ḳarr, Sehrara, Karatet, Meshat, Artenait, Napata, Nehanat, Per-Kem and Per-Nebes. The positions of these cities, with the exception of Meroë, are unknown, but they were probably all on the Island of Meroë. It seems that Hersatuf was attempting to seize all the region between Abu Hamad and Kharṭūm, and to gain possession of all the caravan routes from Abyssinia into Egypt.

### THE STELE OF PĀNKH ALURU

PĀNKH ALURU .






He was an ancestor, if not the father or grandfather, of Nastasen, whose stele is described in the next paragraph; he was born at Taḥeḥ , the position of which is unknown.


### THE STELE OF NASTASEN

The stele of this king was found at Jabal Barkal and is now in the Egyptian Museum in Berlin. He was a native of Meroë and was called by Amen to come to Napata and rule Nubia. He set out forthwith, and reached the town of Aṣṭmursa in one day, and passing through Taḥeḥ and the vineyard planted by Pānkh Aluru arrived at Napata, from which city he sent a messenger to Dongola (Ṭengul ) to announce his arrival. He went into the



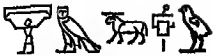
## NUBIA

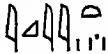
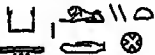
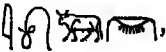
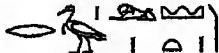


temple of Amen, and the god gave him the crown of Hersatef and the might of Pānkh Aluru. He also gave him sovereignty over the land of Kenset, *i.e.* from Napata to Philae, and the land of Alu , *i.e.* all the land as far south as Kharṭūm, and the Nine Nations who fight with the bow, and the lands on both sides of the Nile, and the Four Quarters of the earth. Nastasen thanked the god with his whole heart, and acknowledged that it was he alone who had made him king. Having danced before Rā  he slew two oxen and offered them up as a sacrifice,  and went and sat on the Golden Throne  in the Golden Apt under a parasol, or umbrella , and received the acclamations of the people, who said "He shall reign as king, and dwell with us in Barua (Meroe)."

The coronation ceremonies being ended, he sailed down the river to Per-Gem, a town near the head of the Third Cataract, where he worshipped the local Amen, who confirmed him in his sovereignty, and with gracious words acknowledged him to be king of Nubia. There too Nastasen went up and sat on the Golden Throne. He then proceeded to Per-Nebes, a town probably near Wādī Halfah, and worshipped the local Amen, who appeared to him and gave him his own leather-bound club (?) ; and after holding converse with the god he went up and sat on the Golden Throne. On his return to Napata he reported to Rā the gracious words which Amen of Per-Gem and Amen of Per-Nebes had spoken to him, and once again he danced before Rā and slew two oxen as sacrifices. Yet another deity remained to be visited, and he went to Tart (position unknown), and appeared before his "beautiful mother" Bast, who took him to her bosom, gave him her left breast, and put into his hands her staff, promising him as she did so old age and happiness.

On his return to Napata Nastasen endowed Amen with four gardens and 36 slaves to tend them, vessels of incense and honey, three measures of myrrh, gold figures of Amen of Gem-Aten and Horus, 13 vessels of *tchām*, or white gold, copper vessels, oxen, cows, etc. The record of Nastasen's fights now begins. The first


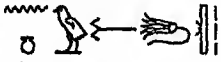
## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

foe to attack him was the chief Kambasuten , who was believed by some Egyptologists to be the Persian king Cambyses, who as we know attempted to invade Nubia about B.C. 525 or 524, but failed to advance far into the country because nearly his whole army died of starvation. Nastasen says that he sent out his bowmen against him from Tchart, that he utterly defeated and routed the enemy, and captured his arms, and boats, and cattle, and laid waste his lands. This statement seems to show that whoever Kambasuten was he was not Cambyses, but the arguments for and against the view that he was are well set forth by Schafer in *Regierungsbericht des Königs Nastasen*, Leipzig, 1901, pp. 9, 10. From the spoil Nastasen gave gifts of cattle to various cities, and to Amen 12 pectorals, a lamp, 300 cattle, 300 sheep, and 200 men (slaves), and 110 slaves, both male and female, whom he had captured in Retheq, Upes, and other districts.

His next expedition was against Aikhentkat, chief of the country of Mekhsentqenn. He utterly defeated the enemy, captured the chief, slew a large number of men, and carried off all the women, a large quantity of gold, 209,659 cattle, 505,349 cows, calves, sheep and goats, 2236 women, and 322 *agut*  of the town of Katalti , and left the remnant nothing to eat except the scrub which grew on the river banks. Of the spoil he dedicated to Amen a lamp, 12 *agut*, 2 copper lamp stands, and 6 pectorals, and he opened the doors of the temple of the Gold Ox , which was the image (?) of Amen of Napata "his good father." His third expedition was against the lands of Rebal  and Akalkar . He took prisoner the chief, with such a large quantity of gold that it could not be counted, 203,216 cattle, 603,107 cows, calves, sheep and goats, and all the women, and "everything" which could be used as food. His fourth expedition was against Arersa . He captured the chief of Masha and carried him off with much gold, 22,120 cattle, 55,200 cows and calves, sheep and goats, and gave them all to Amen of

## NUBIA


Napata. In his fifth expedition he invaded Mekhsherkhert and captured its chief and great numbers of cattle. In his sixth and last expedition he captured the chief of Maikhentkat (?) and all his women, and cattle—35,330 oxen and bulls, and 55,526 cows and sheep—and a large quantity of cattle. Nastasen's great raids were made on the districts on the east side of the Nile, and the later ones on the large cattle-owning tribes on the west bank, the modern Bakḳārah.

When Nastasen returned to Napata messengers were sent to him who reported that certain offerings which had been made to the temple of Gem-Aten by Aspelta had been carried off by raiders who had come from the district of Meṭi , and the people of Gem-Aten asked that soldiers might be sent to recover it, and to punish the enemy. Whether Nastasen sent soldiers to seek for the stolen treasure is not clear, but there is no doubt that the thieves got away with their spoil. At length Nastasen made good the loss to the temple of Gem-Aten, saying, "It was Amen of Napata who gave these things to me, and I give them back to Amen of Gem-Aten." And when the temple of Bast of Thert was raided by the men of Meṭi, and gifts made by Aspelta were carried off by them, Nastasen made good the loss. In return for these acts Amen of Gem-Aten gave him his bow, and Bast gave him an amulet (?) called *ennu* , and decreed that his life should be long. The king ends his inscription with the words, "O Amen of Napata, my good Father, thou hast performed all these things for me. Thou hast made my riches great, thine arm is strong. Verily, O Amen of Napata, my good Father, the words which thou utterest with thy mouth cannot come to nought. Verily when thou closest thy mouth no man beneath the heavens hath the wherewithal to feed himself." It is unfortunately impossible to assign a date to the reign of Nastasen, but judging by the style of the language of his inscription, he must have been one of the last of the kings of Napata who were descended from Piānkhī the Great, or one of the first of a new line. Some authorities place his reign as late as the beginning of the second century B.C., but this I believe to be too late, unless Southern and Northern Nubia had become two separate kingdoms.

# ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

## NUBIA IN THE PTOLEMAIC PERIOD


There is no evidence that the Ptolemies waged war against the Nubians, or raided their country, although they were fully aware that slaves, gold, ebony and ivory came from the regions south of Philae, but it seems that they endeavoured to obtain possession of the wealth of the Sūdān by means of "peaceful penetration." Diodorus says (xx. 58 ff.) that Eumachus the general made an expedition into "higher Africa." He passed over a high mountain 200 stadia in length, which was full of cats, and entered a country which was full of apes; the apes lived in the houses and were worshipped by the people of Pithecussae. The country he reached cannot be identified, but it was situated in some part of the Sūdān where apes (baboons) abounded. The same writer tells us that Ergamenes, the king of Nubia, was brought up at the court of Ptolemy II at Alexandria, and that he was trained in the Grecian discipline and philosophy. How Ergamenes came to be there is not known, but there is little doubt that through him Ptolemy hoped to gain dominion over Nubia, or at least over the gold mines in the Wādī Ulāḳi in the Eastern Desert. The king called Ergamenes by Diodorus has been identified with the builder of the little temple of Dakkah in Lower Nubia, on the walls of which his name appears thus :



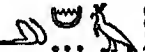
 Tet-ānkh-Amen, emanation of Rā,

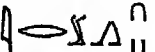
 Arq-Amen, everliving beloved of Isis.

Whether as a result of this intercourse with the Greeks, or whether it was due to his natural independence is not clear, but he set a precedent in the history of his country which is remarkable. The priests of Amen at Meroè (Napata?) had supreme power, and whenever they came to the conclusion that their kings had reigned long enough, they had been in the habit of sending messengers to them commanding them to put themselves to death. They expected such commands to be regarded as expressing the will of the god Amen, and to be obeyed forthwith. When Arq-Amen was king the priests sent him in the usual way a command to kill himself, but instead of obeying them, he collected a considerable number of

## NUBIA

soldiers, and marched with them to the Golden Temple (*i.e.* Per-nub , the House of Gold), and cut the throats of all the priests, and so put an end to the custom and the absolutism of the priests once and for all. In the temple of Arq-Amen at Dakkah the king is seen making offerings to Osiris, Isis, Horus, Amen-Rā, Mut, Khensu, Thoth and Tefnut, but he was a devotee of the god Arihesnefer, and the reliefs which he contributed to the temple of Ptolemy IV at Philae have figures of this god sculptured upon them.

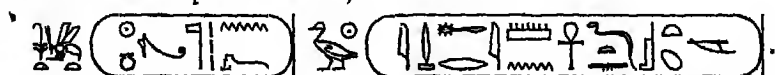
The policy of Ptolemy II in respect of Nubia and the Sūdān is well illustrated by the inscription on a stele of this king which was discovered at Per-Tem (*i.e.* Pithom, in the Wādī Ṭūmilāt) by Naville in 1884. (See *The Store-city of Pithom*, London, 1885; and Brugsch, *Aeg. Zeit.*, 1894, p. 74; and Sethe, *Urkunden, G.-R. Zeit.*, Leipzig, 1904, II. 81.) He sent a fleet of ships to what in the early texts is called the "land of Punt" (he calls it Khemtithet ) ) and the captain of these sailed to the "uttermost part of the Land of the Blacks" , *i.e.* Sūdān, and brought back products of that region which were beloved of the king and Queen Arsinoë. He likewise founded the city of Ptolemaïs Epithēras, not far from the modern Sawākin, and from the "hinterland" he brought large numbers of elephants which were shipped to Egypt. The scribe who wrote the text is correct in saying that "the like of this was never before done for any king in all the earth." The inscription ends with the statement that Ptolemy holds Egypt in his grasp, and all the lands of the South bow before his will, and all the Nine Nations [of Nubia] who fight with the bow are beneath his sandals. All this was undoubtedly true, and Ptolemy had brought about his conquest not by means of raids and wholesale pillage and slaughter, but by merchant caravans and the encouragement of trade.

The portion of Northern Nubia that was of special interest to the Ptolemies was the Dodekaschoinos; this contained twelve Schoinoi , or one hundred and twenty stadia, and it probably represented some ancient division of the country made in

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

very early times. Originally the Dodekaschoinos represented the tract of land which the kings of Egypt set apart for the maintenance of the temples on the Island of Philae. It is difficult to describe exactly the extent of this tract of land, but its length was probably between ninety and one hundred miles. The principal towns in it were: Parembole (Dābūd); Taphis, with Contra-Taphis (Tāfah); Talmis, with Contra-Talmis (Kalābshah); Tutzis (Garf Husēn); Pselcis (Dakkah); Contra-Pselcis (Kubbān); Tachampo (Kūr-tah); and Hierasykaminos (Miharrakah). The last-named town marked the southern limit of the Dodekaschoinos.

Ptolemy IV went on elephant-hunting expeditions in the Sūdān, and apparently developed a trade in elephants. He did not attempt to reach the region where elephants abounded by way of the Nile, for his expeditions started from forts on the west coast of the Red Sea and worked their way inland from them. A limestone slab inscribed in Greek with a dedication to Ares by Alexandros, general of the elephant-hunts in the reign of Ptolemy IV (B.C. 222-205), was found on the Island of Meroë and is now in the British Museum (No. 958). It was first published by Hall (*Classical Review*, vol. XII. 1898, p. 274). Ptolemy IV built a chapel in front of the temple of Arq-Amen at Dakkah, Ptolemy IX built the pronaos, and the other portions of the temple as it now stands were built by a Roman emperor, probably Augustus or Tiberius. The temple is dedicated to Thoth and is oriented due south. Another Nubian king who flourished in the time of the Ptolemies was "King of the South and North, Taaenrā-setepenneteru, Son of Rā, Atchakharamen, the everliving, beloved of Isis," whose cartouches are found on the walls of the temple of Dābūd, written thus:



Though it is impossible to assign exact dates to the beginning and end of the Nubian kingdom at Napata, a general idea of the period of its existence may be gained by considering the evidence which has been collected by the members of the Boston-Harvard Expedition to the Sūdān. Its leader Dr Reisner and his assistants have excavated the pyramid fields of Kurru (or Kuraw), and Nūri near Jabal Barkal, and the three pyramid fields on the Island of Meroë near Bagrawir, or Bagrawiyah, and as a result have obtained

## NUBIA

much information of great importance for the study of Nubian chronology in the first millennium before Christ. The oldest pyramid field at Napata is at Kurru, where they found the pyramids of all the kings of the XXVth Nubian Dynasty of Egypt, except that of Tirhākāh, and some 15 other tombs. The pyramids were those of Piānkhi the Great, Shabaka, Shabataka and Tanutamen. Among the 15 other tombs was probably that of Kashta, the father of Piānkhi, and the last pyramid tomb built at Kurru was that of Tanutamen. The next oldest pyramid field at Napata is Nūri where the Expedition discovered the pyramid tomb of Tirhākāh, the largest in Nubia, and the pyramids of 19 other kings, including the pyramid of Nastasen, who was buried at Nūri though he reigned in Meroe. Piānkhi was reigning at the beginning of the second half of the eighth century B.C., and we know that Tanutamen fled from Egypt before the advance of the Assyrians and their king Ashurbanipal about B.C. 661 or 660. We may say then that the first six kings of the dynasty founded by Kashta, *i.e.* the Ist Dynasty of Napata, lasted for about 100 years, *i.e.* from 750 B.C.–650 B.C., the average length of their reigns being 16½ years. Taking the same average for the 19 kings buried at Nūri we may say that the total length of their reigns was about 314 years; therefore the rule of the kings of Napata came to an end about B.C. 336. Reisner makes the average reign to be 17 years, and thinks that the 26 kings reigned for 442 years; his approximate dates are as follows:

1. Kashta	B.C. 750.	14. Netaklatathamen	B.C. 533.
2. Piānkhi	„ 744.	15. Kargamen (?)	„ 513.
3. Shabaka	„ 710.	16. Astabarqamen	„ 503.
4. Shabataka	„ 700.	17. Asāsheraq (?)	„ 478.
5. Taharq	„ 688.	18. Nasakhmat (?)	„ 458.
6. Tanutamen	„ 663.	19. Maluibamen (?)	„ 453.
7. Atlenersa	„ 653.	20. Talakhamen	„ 423.
8. Senkamenseken	„ 643.	21. Herinutarekamen	„ 418.
9. Anlamen	„ 623.	22. Bagkakeren	„ 398.
10. Aspelta	„ 593.	23. Hersaatēf	„ 327.
11. Amtleq	„ 568.	24. Pankhaler (?)	„ 362.
12. Malneqen	„ 553.	25. Akhratan	„ 342.
13. Nelmai	„ 538.	26. Nastasen	„ 328.

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

For Reisner's views on Nubian Chronology see his *Report in Harvard African Studies*, vol. II. pp. 1-64; the *Boston Bulletin*, Nos. 97 and 112; *Sudan Notes*, vol. II. p. 237 ff.; *Jnl. Eg. Arch.*, vol. IX. p. 34 ff.

We may therefore assume that the line of kings founded by Kashta at Napata came to an end about the middle of the 4th century B.C. and that the sovereignty passed into the hands of the kings of Meroë then or soon afterwards. From the time of Piānkhī the Great the northern part of the Island of Meroë was ruled either by the son of the king of Napata or by some nominee of his who had Meroë for the seat of his government. The prince of Kash who was appointed by the kings of Egypt most probably had a deputy there who collected the "tribute" and taxes on caravans which had to be forwarded to Thebes, but when Piānkhī conquered Egypt he obtained the right to make his son or some official his deputy in Meroë. As the power of the kings of Napata declined, their deputies at Meroë arrogated to themselves new authority, and at the end of the 4th century B.C. were strong enough to declare their independence and ultimately to establish themselves as kings of Napata.


### THE KINGDOM OF MEROË


The successor of Nastasen (about B.C. 328-308) reigned at Meroë, and was buried at Napata (Jabal Barkal), but the greater number of the Merottic kings reigned at Meroë and were buried in pyramid tombs about two miles from the town. According to the table published by Reisner (*Jnl. Eg. Arch.*, vol. IX. p. 35) 33 kings and 12 queens were buried at Meroë and seven kings and eight queens at Jabal Barkal, and there are five other royal tombs at Meroë and three at Jabal Barkal. For chronological purposes the tombs of the kings are the most important, but it seems clear, in view of the tradition that queens reigned at Meroë, that their tombs must also be taken into condition. If we assign to the reigns of the 40 kings an average length of 15 years, and assume that the first of these began to reign early in the 3rd century B.C., the last of them will have reigned at the end of the 3rd or beginning of the 4th century A.D., *i.e.* the series of 40 kings reigned about 600 years. Reisner gives a higher average, namely 17 years and about six months, and

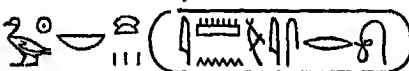


## NUBIA

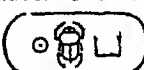
he thinks the rule of the kings of Napata and the kings of Meroë 62 in all, lasted for 1105 years, viz. from B.C. 750 to A.D. 335. As the whole of the material collected by the Harvard-Boston Expedition has not yet been published it is possible that when this has been done some modifications of the figures will have to be made, but on the whole the available evidence suggests that the figures quoted above are approximately correct. At all events they form a useful base for the purpose of making deductions as to the chronology of one of the most difficult periods of Nubian History.

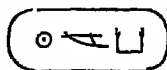

The kings of Meroë, like the kings of Napata, adopted the titles of the Pharaohs, called themselves sons of Rā and wrote their prenomens and nomens in cartouches. Thus the first Meroitic king of Napata was called  "King of the South and the North KHNEM-ĀB-RĀ, son of Rā,

ARKEKAMEN." He was succeeded by  King

of S. and N., Lord of the Two Lands, NEFERĀBRĀĀNKH;  Son of Rā, Lord of Crowns,

ASRUAMERIAMEN; and by  KALTALA,

which was probably a Nubian name. Several kings adopted the same prenomem, and thus we find  KHEPERKARĀ I to

IV,  Merkarā I and II, and  Nebma-

ātrā I and II. Copies of many of the cartouches from Napata and Meroë will be found in Lepsius, *Denkmäler*, Abth. v, and in his *Königsbuch*; for a corrected and complete list we must wait until all the material collected from the excavations made in Northern Nubia and at the pyramid fields of Napata and Meroë has been published. For the excavations see Garstang, *Meroë, the city of the Ethiopians*, Oxford, 1911; *Interim Report*, Liverpool, 1910-14; Reisner, in *Sudan Notes*, vol. 5, p. 173 ff., and *Jnl. Eg. Arch.*, vol. IX. p. 34 ff.; and Budge, *Egyptian Sūdān*, vol. I. p. 337 ff. For the Meroitic inscriptions see Brugsch, *Aeg. Zeit.*, Leipzig, 1887, p. 75 ff.; Griffith, *Jnl. Eg. Arch.*, vol. III. p. 25 ff., vol. IV. pp. 21-27

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

and p. 159 f.; *Merotic Inscriptions*, Parts I and II, London, 1911-12. For copies of the reliefs on the funerary chapels of the pyramids of Meroe and general views of the pyramids see Cailliaud, *Voyage à Méroé*, Paris, 1826-28; Lepsius, *Denkmaler*, Abth. v.; and Hoskins, *Travels in Ethiopia...history of the ancient kingdom of Meroë*, London, 1835.

On the death of Cleopatra Egypt became a Province of the Roman Empire, and the Emperor Augustus appointed Cornelius Gallus Prefect of his new dominion, B.C. 30. A list of the Prefects of Egypt from Cornelius Gallus (B.C. 30-27) to Lucius Julius Vestinus (A.D. 59-62) will be found in Chaine, *La Chronologie de Temps Chrétiens de l'Égypte et de l'Éthiopie*, Paris, 1925, p. 238. A revolt had broken out in Upper Egypt, and Cornelius Gallus advanced to Coptos and Thebes, the headquarters of the rebels, and suppressed the rising with little difficulty. The Thebans had been supported by the Nubians who, having enjoyed peace during the reigns of the Ptolemies, greatly resented the claim which Rome made to the sovereignty of their country. Cornelius Gallus next proceeded to Syene, where he summoned the Nubian chiefs of the district called "Triakontaschoinoi," which extended from Philae to the foot of the Second Cataract, and came to an understanding with them. He granted to them their independence, but made it quite clear to them that the right of Rome to their country was paramount. (See Strabo XVII. 1. § 53; Dion Cassius, LI. 9. 17.) A trilingual inscription in hieroglyphs, Greek and Latin, found at Philae by Col. H. G. Lyons, records the suppression by the Romans of a revolt B.C. 29, and the agreement which the Prefect made with the Nubians must date from this or the following year (Lyons, *Report on Philae*, p. 29). Cornelius Gallus ruled Egypt for four years, and was deposed by Augustus and committed suicide B.C. 26. He was succeeded by Gaius, Aelius Gallus, who quelled a revolt in Alexandria, and Petronius, who spent 18 months in trying to subjugate Arabia Felix. Whilst he was thus engaged the Nubians seized their opportunity and attacked the Roman garrison at Syene, captured the town and Elephantine and Philae, and then advanced northwards and invaded the Thebaid. They overthrew the statues of Caesar, and enslaved the inhabitants and extorted from them heavy payment of produce of all kinds.

## NUBIA


When the extent and seriousness of the revolt were understood in Rome, Petronius, the successor of Aelius Gallus, was despatched with 10,000 infantry and 800 cavalry to crush the rebels, whose army was reported to contain 30,000 men. The Nubians either fled or were driven to the south by Petronius, and they assembled their forces in Pselchis, the modern Dakkah. Thither Petronius followed them and opened a parley with them, and demanded the restitution of the things they had carried off from Egypt, and a declaration of their reasons for revolt. When they complained of the oppression of the monarchs, Petronius told them that they were not the lords of the country of which Caesar was the overlord and sovereign. The Nubians asked for a truce of three days in which to think matters over, but as at the end of this time they had made no suggestion of submission Petronius attacked them, and forced them to fight. There could only be one result of the fight, viz. victory for Petronius. The bows and arrows, skin shields, clubs and spears, availed the natives little, and the Nubians, undisciplined and poorly armed, were utterly defeated. Those who escaped with their lives fled to the desert, or swam to an island in the river, or hid themselves in the houses of the town. Among the fugitives were the generals of Candace, a Merotic queen of Napata, who probably had been sent by their mistress to direct the revolt. Petronius pursued those who fled by river in boats and rafts and, having captured them all, despatched them to Alexandria. He then attacked the town of Pselchis, and captured it about B.C. 20, and either killed or made captives its inhabitants. Strabo says that Petronius next went to Premnis, a strong city, "travelling over the hills of sand, beneath which the army of Cambyses was overwhelmed by the setting in of a whirlwind." Now Ptolemy and Pliny both call this place "Primis" and Primis has been identified with the ruined fort of **Ḳaṣr Ibrīm**, i.e. the Fortress of Ibrīm, which stands on a high rock on the last bank of the Nile about 120 miles to the south of Aswān. This Petronius could easily have reached by boat, and therefore the mention of "hills of sand" by Strabo is difficult to explain. The monuments and inscription found near the village and fortress of Ibrīm show that the site was occupied by the troops of Thothes III, Amenhetep II, Seti I and Rameses II, all of whom


## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS


recognized its strategical value and importance. The Romans built a fort there, as also did Lord Kitchener. Petronius captured Premnis, or Primis, and then advanced to Napata, "the royal seat of Candace" whom Strabo describes as *ἀνδρική τις γυνή πεπηρωμένη τὸν ἕτερον τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν*, "a masculine woman who had lost an eye." We are not told what route he followed in going to Napata, but, as hills of sand are mentioned, it is possible that he followed one of the caravan routes on the east bank and, passing through a part of the great desert between Wādī Ḥalfah and Abu Hamad, came to the Nile either at Dongola or at Marawi, quite near to Napata. Candace had retired to some stronghold in the neighbourhood, leaving her son in charge of Napata. She sent envoys to Petronius to treat for peace, and offered to give up the prisoners she had taken at Syene, and to restore Caesar's statues. Her proposals appear to have exasperated Petronius, who proceeded to attack Napata forthwith, and the capital of Nubia fell into his hands. Candace's son fled during the attack, and nothing more is known of him. Petronius made prisoners of the inhabitants, and then, deeming it unwise or impracticable to advance to the town of Meroë on the Island of Meroë, about which he must certainly have obtained a considerable amount of information, he collected the spoil from Napata, and destroyed the temples and other buildings, and returned to Primis. He fortified Primis and placed a garrison there, with supplies sufficient to maintain four hundred men for two years. He sent one thousand of the prisoners to Caesar as slaves, and the rest were sold by public auction. Many of the prisoners died of privation and diseases. The Nubians then repeated the tactics which they had practised for three thousand years or more. As soon as Petronius left Candace appeared from the stronghold where she had hidden herself on the advance of the Romans, and having collected an army of several thousands of men she came down the river with them and attacked the Roman garrison at Primis. Petronius heard of their coming and went to the assistance of the garrison, and managed to get into the fortress before the arrival of the Nubians from the south. Candace sent envoys with renewed suggestions for peace, but he refused to treat with them and referred them to Caesar. When they replied that they did not know who Caesar was, or where he was, he appointed


## NUBIA

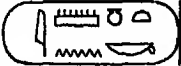
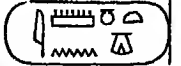
men to conduct them to Caesar, who was then at Samos. When they arrived, and were taken into the presence of the emperor, they pleaded Candace's cause to such good purpose that he granted them all their petitions and remitted the tribute due from them.

In his description of the work done by the Harvard-Boston Expedition at Jabal Barkal, Reisner states that he found traces of the restoration of two parts of the temple of Amen, which was practically built by Piānkhi the Great, and was partially destroyed by Petronius between B.C. 23-20. The restoration of the inner walls of one part bear the prenomen  Kheper-ka-Rā,


and that of another part gives the name of a king whose prenomen was  Ankh-ka-Rā. A restoration of the sanctuary also gives the son-of-Rā name of a king whose prenomen Reisner reads Nd-ka-mn. All these restorations were made about the same time. Whilst clearing one of the pylons an inscription was found on which

were inscribed the prenomen  of a king and parts of his Nebti and Golden Horus names, and Reisner thinks that the son-of-Rā name of this king was Nd-ka-mn, or Nud-ka-men. Now, there are no less than four Nubian kings whose prenomen was


, but only one of their nomens resembles Nud-ka-men,

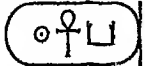
viz.  Nut-kamen, or  Nut-gamen,

and this is thought to be the Egyptian equivalent of

 Nithkamni, or Nutkamen. Thus there is

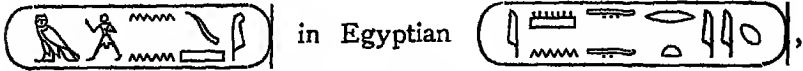
little doubt that the king who restored one part of the temple of Amen at Napata after the destruction wrought by Petronius was Netekamen, and if this be so he must have reigned at Napata *after* B.C. 23-20. Another part of the temple was restored by the crown-

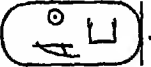
prince, called in Meroitic Sharkrer ,

whose prenomen was ; he was a son of Netekamen, and thus the two restorations must have been carried out within a

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

few years of each other. Of the acts of Netekamen nothing is known; according to Reisner he reigned from B.C. 15 to A.D. 15, and for a part of this time in conjunction with Mantari



whose prenomen was Merkarā .

The recent excavations at Napata and Meroë have supplied no information about the "masculine woman who had lost an eye," who dared to try conclusions with the might of Rome by attacking the garrison at Primis. Strabo calls her by her title "Candace," and not by her name, and as all the queens of Napata and Meroë bore this title it is not easy to identify her. Of the meaning of this title and its origin, nothing is known, but it is certainly very old, and was probably the official designation of the head of some great tribe in southern Nubia. The Candace mentioned by Strabo seems to have been a widow, at all events there is no talk of any husband, and to have ruled independently at Napata and not at Meroë. Her power was broken by the Romans, but of her doings after her defeat nothing is known. She is said to have been the last ruler of Napata who was buried at Napata, and pyramid No. X is supposed to have been her tomb (see *Jul. Eg. Arch.*, vol. IX. p. 63). After her death the kings of Meroë were the overlords of all Nubia and the Island of Meroë.

### CLASSICAL WRITERS ON NUBIA AND MEROË

According to Herodotus (II. 29) Meroë was a journey of 56 days from Syene; 4 days to Tachompso, 40 days by land from Tachompso and 12 days by boat to Meroë, "which is said to be the capital of the Ethiopians." The only gods worshipped there are Jupiter (*i.e.* Amen or Amen-Rā) and Bacchus (*i.e.* Osiris). Another journey of 56 days brought the traveller to the country of the Automoli, or descendants of the 240,000 soldiers who deserted from Psammetichus, who were called Ἀσμάχ. This country must have been situated in some part of western Abyssinia. In Ethiopia there is much gold, elephants abound, and the country produces trees of all kinds and ebony. The men are taller, handsomer, and longer lived than anywhere else (II. 114). Cambyses sent spies into

## NUBIA

Ethiopia to find out if the "table of the Sun" really existed in that country (III. 17). This table of the Sun was a meadow in the skirts of the city of the "long-lived Ethiopians," who dwell in that part of Libya which borders upon the Southern sea. It is full of the boiled flesh of all manner of beasts, which the magistrates are careful to store with meat every night, and where whoever likes may come and eat during the day. The people of the land say that the earth itself brings forth the food. Cambyses sent to Elephantine for some of the Ichthyophagi who knew the Ethiopian language, and when they arrived he told them what to say; he despatched them into Ethiopia with the following gifts: a purple robe (robe of honour?), a gold necklace, armlets, an alabaster flask of myrrh and a cask of palm wine. The Ichthyophagi duly delivered the message of Cambyses, and presented his gifts to the king of the Ethiopians, who was not deceived as to the real intent of Cambyses. The dye of the purple robe suggested to him deceit, the neckchain and armlets he regarded as fetters and said they had much stronger ones, the myrrh, like the purple dye, suggested to him deceit, but having drunk a draught of wine he was greatly delighted. In answer to his questions the Ichthyophagi told him that the king ate bread made of wheat, and that no Persian lived longer than 80 years. In answer to the questions of the Ichthyophagi the king said that most of his men lived to be 120 years old, and some even more, and that they ate boiled flesh and drank nothing but milk. They owed their long life to the water of a certain fountain in which they washed, and the water thereof made their skins glossy and sleek as if they had bathed in oil, and the odour that rose from the water was like the perfume of violets. The king then led the spies into his prison where they saw that all the prisoners were bound in fetters of gold, for copper was the rarest of all the metals and the most valuable. The spies were then shown the "table of the Sun," and the coffins of the Ethiopians, which were made of crystal and were cylindrical in shape. The dried bodies of the dead were covered with lime plaster, on which was painted portraits of the deceased persons, and then inserted into the crystal cylinders, through which they were plainly visible. Each body was kept in the house of the next of kin for one year, and first fruits and sacrifices were offered to it. When the year is

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

ended, the crystal coffin with its contents is removed from the house and set up on a piece of ground near the town. Before the spies left the king gave them a bow for them to carry to Cambyses, and he told them to tell him that when the Persians could pull a bow of the strength of this easily their king might come with an army of superior strength against the king of the Ethiops. Meanwhile let him thank the gods that they have not put it into the heart of the sons of the Ethiops to covet countries which do not belong to them (III. 18-21). When the spies returned to Egypt and delivered the message of the king of Ethiopia, Cambyses was filled with wrath, and set out with a portion of his forces to invade Ethiopia. Before they had marched one-fifth of the way their supply of provisions failed. They first killed and ate their beasts of burden, and then lived for a short time on grass and herbs, which came to an end as soon as they reached the sandy deserts. Here they were reduced to eating each other. When Cambyses heard that cannibalism had broken out among his troops, he abandoned his invasion of Ethiopia, and retreated to Memphis by way of Thebes, having lost the greater part of his army.

Herodotus mentions (II. 104) that the Ethiopians are black-skinned and have woolly hair, and that they practise circumcision.

According to Strabo (I. 2. § 25) Ethiopia runs in the same direction as Egypt, and resembles it both in its position with respect to the Nile, and in its other geographical circumstances. It is narrow, long, and subject to inundation; beyond the reach of this inundation it is desolate and parched, and unfitted for the habitation of man; some districts lying to the east and some to the west [of the river]. For the mode of life [of the Ethiopians] is wretched; they are for the most part naked, and wander from place to place with their flocks. Their flocks, herds and dogs are small. The story of the Pygmies arose from the diminutive size of these people (XVI. 4. 2. § 1 ff.). They live on millet and barley, from which a drink is prepared. They use butter and fat instead of oil. There is no fruit except that grown in the royal gardens. They eat grass, small twigs of trees, the lotus and roots of reeds. They live also upon the flesh and blood of animals, milk and cheese. They worship their kings, who are secluded in their palaces as gods. Their largest royal seat is the city of Meroe, of the same





A TYPICAL VILLAGE IN SOUTHERN ABYSSINIA



VIEW OF THE VILLAGE OF KASSAM NEAR IZOGAI IN 1937  
FROM KUSSEGER, "REISEN" PLATE 70



## NUBIA

name as the island, the shape of which is said to be that of a shield. Its length is about 3000 stadia, and its breadth 1000 stadia ; but its size is perhaps exaggerated. It is very mountainous and contains great forests. The inhabitants are nomads, who are partly hunters and partly husbandmen. It contains mines of copper, iron, gold, and precious stones of various kinds. On the Libyan side there are great hills of sand, and on the Arabian side continuous precipices. There are the rivers Astaboras (the Atbarā), Astapus (Blue Nile) and Astasobas. The houses are made of palm trunks split longitudinally and palm branches, and bricks. Rock salt is found there as in Arabia. The palm, persea, ebony and carob trees abound. The animals hunted are elephants, lions and panthers. There are also serpents which will fight elephants, and many kinds of wild animals which flee for shelter from the hot, waste districts, to the marshes. Above Meroë is the large lake Psebo (*i.e.* Šānā), in which is a well-inhabited island. The Libyans and Ethiopians contend with each other for the possession of the islands and the banks of the river, the former occupying the left bank and the latter the right. The Ethiopians use bows made of fire-hardened wood four cubits long, the women are also armed and wear copper rings in their noses. Some wear sheep-skins, and some go naked, or wear loin-girdles made of sheep-skins or plaited hair. They believe in an immortal God who created the universe, and a nameless mortal god, whose nature is undefined. Kings and royal personages are regarded as gods, and men from whom benefits have been received. It is thought that some who dwell in the hot regions have no god at all ; they curse the sun when he rises, and abuse him because he burns their bodies, and they hide in the marshes. The Merotites worship Hercules, Pan and Isis, and another barbaric god (Jupiter?). Some tribes throw the dead into the river ; others keep them in cases of hyalus in their houses or in mud coffins. Their most solemn oaths are sworn by the dead. Kings are chosen for their personal beauty, or bravery, or riches, or breeding of cattle. The priests are all powerful and sometimes order their king to commit suicide, and appoint a successor. One of their kings refused to do this, and, taking his soldiers, went to the temple and slew the priests. If the king be mutilated in any way his bodyguards mutilate themselves so as to resemble him ; and if necessary they will die with him.

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

The information about "Ethiopia" supplied by Diodorus (Bk. III) may be thus summarized: The Ethiopians say that they were the first men in the world, and they may be regarded as Autochthones. They were the first to establish religious worship and to make offerings to the gods. The Egyptians were settlers from Ethiopia, and Egypt itself is a land built up by the slime and mud which the Nile brought down from Ethiopia. Most of the Egyptian laws are of Ethiopian origin, and Egyptian customs, *e.g.* the deification of kings and funerary ceremonies, were derived from Ethiopia. In both countries the priests are shaven and wear the same kind of vestments. The king is chosen by the god, and rules according to the ancient laws of the country. A criminal is compelled to commit suicide, and the priests command the king who is displeasing to them to commit suicide, saying that it is the will of the gods. The first to break through this custom was Agamenes, who went to the temple and cut the throats of the priests. When a king dies his domestic servants are put to death, and such a death is considered honourable. These laws are observed by the Meroites, and the people of the country near to Egypt. But there are other Ethiopians, some on the east and west banks of the Nile, some on the islands, and some live near Arabia and some in the heart of Africa. The greater number of these, especially the riverain folk, are blacks, with flat faces and curly hair; they are very fierce and cruel, have the manners of the beasts, and skilfully devise wickedness. Their personal habits are filthy and nasty, their nails are like the claws of beasts, and they have high shrill voices. They have shields made of raw ox-hide, short lances, and darts with forked heads. Their bows are four cubits long, and when shooting their arrows they use their feet to bend their bows; when their arrows are exhausted they fight with clubs. Their women bear arms, and some have a brass ring attached to their lips. Some go naked all their lives. Some wear the tails of sheep to hide their shame, others wear skins, and some have loin-cloths made of their own hair, for the sheep have no fleeces. They eat fruit, branches of trees, young reeds, lotus plants and sesame (millet?), archers eat game, and some of them live on their cattle, milk and cheese. The peoples south of Meroë believe in the existence of gods who are eternal and incorruptible, *e.g.* the sun and moon, and in gods who

## NUBIA

were originally mortal men. These gods are Isis, Pan, Hercules and Jupiter ; some believe there are no gods. The Ethiopians and Africans are always fighting for the possession of the best lands. Herds of elephants come down to the rich lands and swamps for food. Some say that in the deserts there are serpents large enough to kill elephants. This is all that need be said about Western Ethiopia [*i.e.* the region on the west bank of the Nile from Egypt to Lado].

We will now speak of the country east of the Nile, between the Nile and the Red Sea. Here there is a place full of rich gold mines. The mines are worked by criminals, prisoners of war, and men who have incurred the king's wrath; their families are sent with them. The miners are bound in fetters and work day and night, and escape is impossible. Savage and barbarian soldiers are the gangers, who wield their whips incessantly. The rock containing the metal is heated and the quartz is worked out by hand and crushed with hammers. Men that are strong are set to work with picks, and they follow the lie of the quartzite formation. In the underground passages the miners carry lamps attached to their foreheads. Boys follow the hewers and bring the lumps of ore to the surface, where it is brayed in mortars and then ground into dust in mills worked by women. The miners are naked, and they are made to work, whether sick, or lame, incessantly; neither age nor infirmity of either man or woman is considered. Beaten with sticks or whips and exhausted with unremitting toil they often drop down dead. The powdered ore is washed on a sloping board, with the result that the useless matter is separated from the gold which remains behind. The gold dust is washed several times and is then put into earthen jars sealed with mud, which are placed in a furnace for five days and nights. When cooled the jars are opened and are found to contain lumps of pure gold. The following are the peoples who live in Troglodyta along the coast of the Red Sea.

The Ichthyophages, who live on the sea-coasts. They live like the beasts, go naked and have no perception of good or evil. They trap fish among the rocks, spear them with horns of goats and kill them by beating them with stones. They expose the fish in pots to the sun, separate the flesh from the bones and boil it with the seed of *Paliurus* until it becomes like a paste which is laid out on

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

stones and dried; after this each person eats as much as he thinks fit. Sometimes they catch large shell-fish, some weighing as much as four minas, and having smashed the shells with stones they eat the fish inside, which much resemble oysters. When the fish-paste and shell-fish cannot be had, they collect fish bones, break them in pieces and bruise them with stones and eat them. They fish for four days at a time, eating, drinking and accompanying with their wives, and on the fifth day they retreat to the springs at the foot of the hills and drink water immoderately. Ptolemy III sent his friend Simia to visit these people, and Agatharcides of Cnidus says that they are emotionless. They cannot talk to strangers and remain unmoved at the sight of them. Even if struck with swords, or wounded or hurt in any way they show no resentment. They show neither anger nor pity when their wives and children are killed before their eyes. Though they dwell on or near the sea shore they have no knowledge of ships. Some of the fish-eaters live in shelters formed by the interlaced branches of trees, and some in natural caves in the most difficult and inaccessible mountains.

The Chelonophages live on the islands and take the sea-tortoises, as they lie asleep in the sun; some of these creatures are as large as a small fishing boat, and the natives use the shells as boats and as coverings for their houses.

The Cetivores, who feed upon the whales cast up by the sea.

The Rizophages, or Root-eaters, who live on the roots of reeds pounded and dried in the sun; they suffer much from the attacks of lions.

The Hylophages climb trees and feed upon the buds and tender branches. They are of slender build and spring from tree to tree, and if they fall they suffer no injury. They go naked and have their wives in common. They are armed with clubs with which they beat their enemies to a pulp. Many go blind and die of starvation because they cannot see to climb the trees and so obtain food.

The Spermatophages live upon fruits, and a sweet herb which has a stalk like a turnip.

The Hylogones, who sleep in trees, and hide in thickets and kill the wild beasts when they come down to the pools to drink;

## NUBIA

their arms are clubs, stones and darts. Their boys are taught to practise the casting of darts, and if they fail to hit the target they are kept without food.

In the west of Ethiopia live the Elephantophages who live in forests and hamstring elephants and eat them.

The Simoes, who attack the Struthophages.

The Struthophages, or Ostrich-eaters, who arm themselves with the horns of oryxes.

The Aeridophages, who live on the borders of the deserts. They are small, lean and meagre, and are quite black. They live upon locusts which they kill by smoke, and then salt and store for food. They are short lived, and they die of a disease caused by lice breeding in their bodies.

The Cynomones or Cynomolges, who wear long beards, and live upon the flesh of the animals which their fierce hunting dogs kill for them. "The nations that lie farthest south live the lives of beasts under the shapes of men."

The Troglodytes or Nomades, are a number of shepherd tribes who live under the rule of a king; they have their wives in common. They live on their cattle, and blood and milk boiled together, and drink a decoction of the plant *Palinurus*. They wear skins about their loins, and are circumcised like the Egyptians; deformed persons are mutilated in their infancy. Those of them who are called Megabareans carry round ox-hide shields, and are armed with iron-bound clubs and bows and arrows. They tie twigs round the necks and feet of their dead and carry them up to the top of a hill, where they cast stones upon them until they are covered over; on the top of each heap they set up the horn of a goat. When a man becomes too old to follow the herds, he either commits suicide or is strangled by a friend; all maimed or diseased persons are put to death. In the country of the Troglodytes the sun is so hot at midday that two men standing side by side cannot see each other because of the thickness of the air. And if meat and water be put into a brass pot and set in the sun, the meat is straightway cooked by the heat of the sun.

The animals in Ethiopia are: the Rhinoceros, a hard-skinned animal, with a flat horn growing out a little above his nostrils. He kills elephants by goring them, when they bleed to death. The

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

Sphinx, which is a docile animal, and can be trained by man. The Cynocephalus, or dog-headed ape, is like an ugly-faced man. The Cepus, which has the face of a lion, but otherwise resembles a panther. He is as fierce as a wild bull, and feeds upon flesh: he is as swift as a horse, has a very wide mouth, and is red in colour. He can move his horns as he moves his ears, and his hair stands on end; his skin is impenetrable, and no one has ever succeeded in killing him. The Croent, a beast part dog and part wolf. Serpents of very large size exist in the country, and one, thirty cubits in length, was captured by hunters in a net and brought to Alexandria and presented by them to Ptolemy II.

Pliny's account of Ethiopia (VI. 35) may be thus summarized: Leaving Syene we find on the Arabian side the Catadupi, the Syenitae, and the towns of Tacompsos (Thatice), Aramasos, Sesamos, Sanduma, Masindomacam, Arabeta and Boggia, Leupitorga, Tantarne, Mecindata, Noa, Glploa, Gystate, Megada, Lea, Renni, Nups, Direa, Patiga, Bacata, Dumana, Rhadata, where a gold cat was worshipped, Boron in the interior, and Mallos, near Meroë; this is the account given by Bion. But Juba says that there is a city on Mount Megatichos, which lies between Egypt and Ethiopia, by the Arabians known as Myrson, after which come Tacompsos, Aramus, Sesamos, Pide, Mamuda, Orambis, situate near a stream of bitumen, Amodita, Prodda, Parenta, Mama, Tesatta, Gallas, Zoton, Graucome, Emeus, the Pidibotae, the Hebdamecontacometae, Nomades, who dwell in tents, Cyste, Macadagale, Proaprimis, Nups, Detrelis, Patis, the Gambreves, the Magasnei, Segasmala, Crandala, Denna, Cadeuma, Thena, Batta, Alana, Mascoa, the Scamni, Hora, situate on an island, and then Abala, Androgalis, Sesecre, the Malli and Agole.

On the African side there are Tacompsos, and after it Maggore, Saea, Edos, Plenariae, Pinnis, Magassa, Buma, Linthuma, Spintum, Sydop, the Censi, Pindictora, Acug, Orsum, Sansa, Maumarum, Urbim, the town of Molum, by the Greeks called Hypaton, Pagoarca, Zmanes, at which points elephants begin to be found, the Mambli, Berressa, and Acetuma; there was formerly a town also called Epis, over against Meroë, which had, however, been destroyed before Bion wrote. These are the names of places given as far as Meroë; but hardly any of them now exist. At all events, the praetorian



## NUBIA

troops that were sent by the Emperor Nero, under the command of a tribune, for the purposes of enquiry, when, among his other wars, he was contemplating an expedition against Ethiopia, brought back word that they had met with nothing but deserts on their route. The Roman arms penetrated into these regions in the time of the late Emperor Augustus, under the command of P. (or Caius?) Petronius, a man of Equestrian rank and Prefect of Egypt. That general took the following cities, the only ones we now find mentioned there, in the following order: Pselcis, Primis, Abuncis, Phthuris, Cambusis, Atteva, and Stadasis, where the river Nile, as it thunders down the precipices, has quite deprived the inhabitants of the power of hearing; he also sacked the town of Napata. The extreme distance to which he penetrated beyond Syene was 970 miles; it was not the Roman arms that rendered these regions a desert. Ethiopia, gaining in its turn the mastery, and then again reduced to servitude, was at last worn out by its continual wars with Egypt, having been a famous and powerful country even at the time of the Trojan war, when Memnon was its king. It is evident from the fabulous stories about Andromeda, that it ruled over Syria in the time of King Cepheus, and that its sway extended as far as the shore of our sea.

The extent of the country has been the subject of conflicting accounts; first by Dalion, who travelled a considerable distance beyond Meroë, and after him by Aristocreon and Basilis, as well as the younger Simonides, who made a stay of five years at Meroë, when he wrote his account of Ethiopia. Timosthenes, admiral of the fleets of Philadelphus, says that Meroë is 60 days' journey from Syene; while Eratosthenes states that the distance is 625 miles, and Artemidorus says it is 600. Sebosus says that from the extreme point of Egypt, the distance to Meroë is 1675 miles, while the other writers last mentioned make it 1250 miles. The envoys sent by Nero reported that the distance from Syene to Meroë was 871 miles, the following being the items: From Syene to Hiera Sycaminos 54 miles; from thence to Tama 72 miles; to the country of the Evonymitæ, the first region of Ethiopia, 120 miles; to Acina 54 miles; to Pittara 25 miles; and to Tergedus 106 miles. They stated also that the island of Gagaudes is half-way between Syene and Meroë; here the bird called "parrot" was first seen; at

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

the island of Artacula the animal called "sphingium" [a kind of ape] was first discovered by them, and after passing Tergedus the dog-headed ape. The distance from thence to Napata is 80 miles; this little town is the only one of all that now survives. From thence to the island of Meroë is 360 miles. The grass near Meroë is greener and fresher, and there are rudimentary forests, and traces of the rhinoceros and elephant. Meroë is 70 miles from the entrance to the Island of Meroë, and close to it is another island called Tadu, which forms a harbour facing those who enter the right-hand channel of the river. The buildings in the city, the envoys reported, were few, and the district was ruled by a woman called "Candace"; queen after queen for many years had borne this name. There was a temple of Jupiter Hammon there, which was greatly venerated, and there were smaller shrines of this god throughout the country. The Island of Meroë was famous in the days of the Ethiopian dominion, and it had a standing army of 200,000 armed men, and 4000 artisans dwelt in it. There are 45 kings in Ethiopia. The names of the country have been Aetheria, Atlantia, and Ethiopia, from Ethiops, the son of Vulcan. Owing to the great heat of the country, men and animals assume monstrous forms, and it is said that in the eastern part of the interior there is a people who have no noses, the whole face presenting a flat surface; others have no upper lip, others have no tongues, and others have only one nostril. In others the mouth has grown together, and they breathe through one nostril, and absorb their drink through the hollow stalk of the oat. Some nations use movements of the head and limbs in the place of speech. Others were unacquainted with the use of fire until the time of Ptolemy Lathyrus. The Pygmies live in the marshes in which the Nile takes its rise. On the coast of Ethiopia is a range of mountains, of red colour, and they seem to be always burning.

After passing Meroë the country is bounded by the Troglodytae and the Red Sea, which is a journey of three days from Napata to that sea; here rain-water is stored, and in the district there is much gold. In the parts beyond dwell the Adabuli, an Ethiopian people. Over against Meroë are the Megabari (Adiabari); some dwell in the city of Apollo, and some are Nomades, living on the flesh of elephants. Opposite, on the African side, are the Macrobi, and

## NUBIA

beyond the Megabarri are the Memnones and the Dabeli, and 20 days further on are the Critensi. Beyond these are the Dochi, and then the Gymnetes, who always go naked; then come the Andetae, the Mothitae, the Mesaches, and the Ipsodoraë, who are black in colour and stain their bodies with red ochre. On the African side are the Medimni, and a nation of Nomades, who live on the milk of the dog-headed ape, and the Aladi and the Syrbotae, who are said to be eight cubits high in stature.

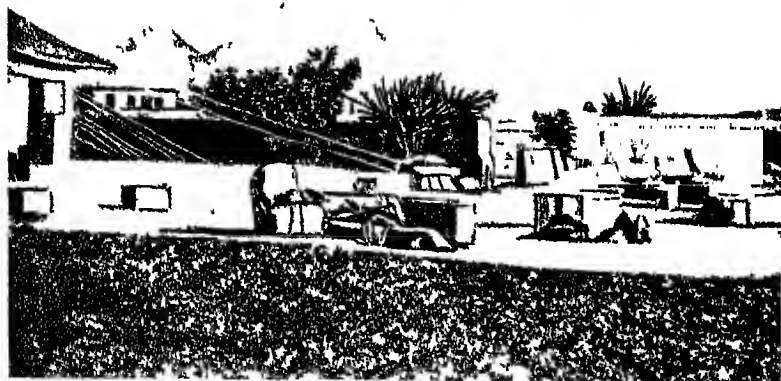
Aristocreon says that 5 days' journey from Meroë, on the Libyan side, is the town of Tolles; 12 days' journey further on is Esar, a town founded by the Egyptians who fled from Psammetichus; they dwelt there for 300 years. Opposite on the Arabian side is a town of theirs called "Daron." Esar is called by Bion "Sape," and he says the name means "strangers"; their capital, situated on an island, is Sembolitis, and a third place of theirs is Sinat in Arabia. Between the mountains and the Nile are the Simbarri and the Palugges; and on the mountains are the numerous tribes of the Asachae; they are five days from the sea, and live on the flesh of the elephants which they hunt. An island in the Nile, belonging to the Semberritae, is ruled by a queen. Eight days further on are the Ethiopian Nubei; their town Tenupsis is on the Nile. Among the Sesambri, none of the quadrupeds, including the elephants, have ears. On the African side are the Tonobari, and the Ptoenphae, who have a dog for their king, and they divine his commands from his movements, the Auruspi, whose town is far from the Nile, and then come the Archisarmi, the Phaliges, the Marigerri, and the Casmari. From Sembolitis to Meroë is a journey of 20 days. Other islands with towns are: Asara, Darde, Medoë, with its town Asel, Garodes, with a town of the same name. Along the banks of the Nile are: Navi, Modunda, Andatis, Secundum, Colligat, Secande, Navectabe, Cumi, Agrospi, Aegipa, Candrogari, Araba and Summara. Beyond, at Sirbitum, the mountains end; some say that the maritime Ethiopians, the Nisacaethae, and the Nisyti, *i.e.* "men with three or four eyes," dwelt here; they are thus called because of their unerring aim when shooting arrows. Southwards along the Nile, beyond the Greater Quicksands, are the Cisori, who use rain-water only. The other nations are the Longompори, five days from the Oecalices, the

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

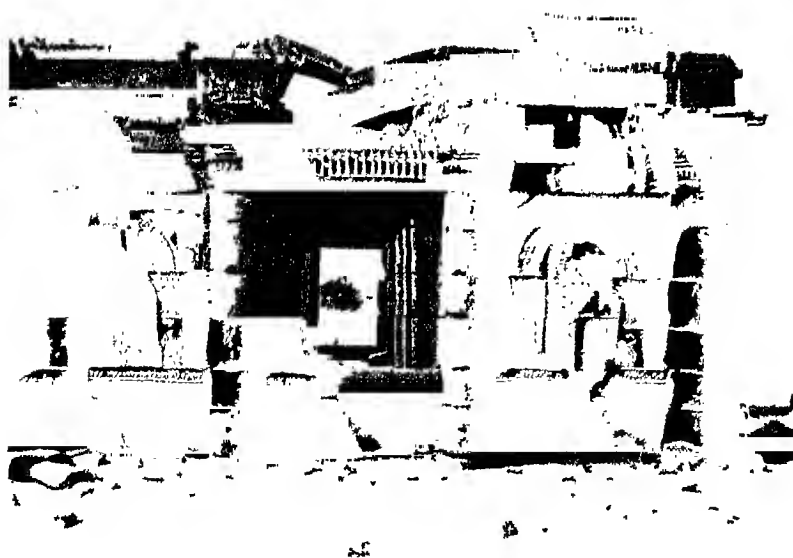
Usibalci, the Isbeli, the Perusii, the Ballii, the Cispii; all the rest of the country is desert inhabited by fabulous people only. To the west are the Nigroæ, whose king has only one eye, and that in the forehead, the Agriophagi, who live chiefly on the flesh of panthers and lions, the Pamphagi, who will eat anything, the Anthropophagi, who live on human flesh, the Cynamolgi, a people with the heads of dogs, the Artabatitæ, who have four feet, and wander about after the manner of wild beasts; and after them the Hesperiaæ and the Perorsi, who dwell on the confines of Mauretania. Some Ethiopian tribes live on nothing but locusts salted and dried, but these people do not live beyond their fortieth year.

M. Agrippa thought that the total length of Ethiopia, including the Red Sea, was 2170 miles, and that its breadth, including Upper Egypt, was 1297 miles. Some authors divide its length thus: from Meroe to Sirbitum, 11 days' sail; from Sirbitum to the Dabelli 15 days; and from them to the Ethiopian Ocean, 6 days' journey. It is generally agreed that the distance from the ocean to Meroë is 625 miles, and from Meroe to Syene, what we have already stated. Ethiopia lies from south-east to south-west. Forests of ebony trees are to be seen in it, and in the midst of it is a mountain, of immense height, which overhangs the sea and emits a perpetual flame. The Greeks call it "Theon Ochema," *i.e.* "chariot of the gods," and at a distance of four days' sail from it is the promontory of Hesperu Ceras, upon the confines of Africa, and close to the Hesperiaæ, an Ethiopian nation. Some assert that there are in this region hills of a moderate height, which afford a pleasant shade from the groves with which they are clad, and are the haunts of Aegipans and Satyrs.

Turning from the vague and oft-times misleading remarks of the ancient writers quoted above, we may refer briefly to the writings of modern travellers in the Island of Meroë, and their descriptions of it. James Bruce towards the close of the 18th century was the first to estimate truly the extent of the Island, which he found to be a region having about the same area as Ireland, bounded by the Atbarā, the Nile, the Blue Nile and its tributaries. In October 1772 travelling northwards from Shendi he came to the beginning of the Island of Kurgos, and close to the mountain called Gabbainy, he lighted upon the ruins of a large town. He found broken



THE FORTRESS OF KASJA



THE SMALLER EGYPTO-ROMANO TEMPLE AT NAGAA THE OUTSIDE OF  
THE WEST END



## NUBIA

pedestals of statues, parts of an obelisk with hieroglyphic inscriptions, and the Arabs told him of the existence of statues of men in black stone. He found it impossible not to guess that the remains before him were the ruins of the ancient city of Meroe (see his *Travels*, London and Edinburgh (7 vols.), 1813, vol. VI. p. 453). In the neighbourhood of Shendi, J. L. Buickhardt (1784-1817) saw the ruins of houses, etc., but he tells us nothing about Meroe (see his *Travels in Nubia*, London, 1818). The identification of the ruins at Kabushīyah with Meroe is due to Cailliaud (1787-1869), who went to Egypt in 1813 and entered the service of Muhammad 'Alī Pāshā, who sent him to various sites on the Red Sea and to the Oases in the Western Desert to collect information for him. He was permitted to accompany Isma'il's expedition to the Sūdān, and whilst there he succeeded in making a number of valuable discoveries. He made a plan of the town of Meroe, and measured the pyramids, and at Sōba on the Blue Nile he discovered the famous stone ram which was in the grounds of the palace at Khartūm. He made plans of the temples at Nagaa, and he visited and described the ruins at Wād Ba Nagaa. He discovered the ruins at Maṣawwarāt, and the temple of Wādī-al-Banāt. He published a full account of his researches in 1819-22 in his *Voyage à Meroe*, Paris, 1826-28. G. A. Hoskins visited Meroe and Masawwarāt, and published drawings and descriptions of the monuments and pyramids (*Travels in Ethiopia*, London, 1835), but was unable to go to Nagaa. G. Feilini opened some of the pyramids of Meroe and obtained some wonderful Meroitic jewellery (see Budge, *The Egyptian Sūdān*, London, 1907, vol. I. p. 285 ff.), but his sole object in excavating was to obtain buried treasure (see his *Relation historique des Fouilles opérées dans la Nubie*, Rome, 1838). In 1844 R. Lepsius visited Meroe, and he and his assistants made plans of the pyramid fields, and copies of the inscriptions, etc. on the walls of the chapels of the pyramids. He contented himself with describing the rites which Cailliaud had discovered, and copying the inscriptions on the monuments found there. His descriptions are published in his *Briefe aus Aegypten, Aethiopen und der Halbinsel des Sinai*, Berlin, 1852 (English translation by Horner, London, 1853), and the inscriptions in the *Denkmäler*, Berlin, 1849. In 1903-8 Mr J. W. Crowfoot explored

# ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS



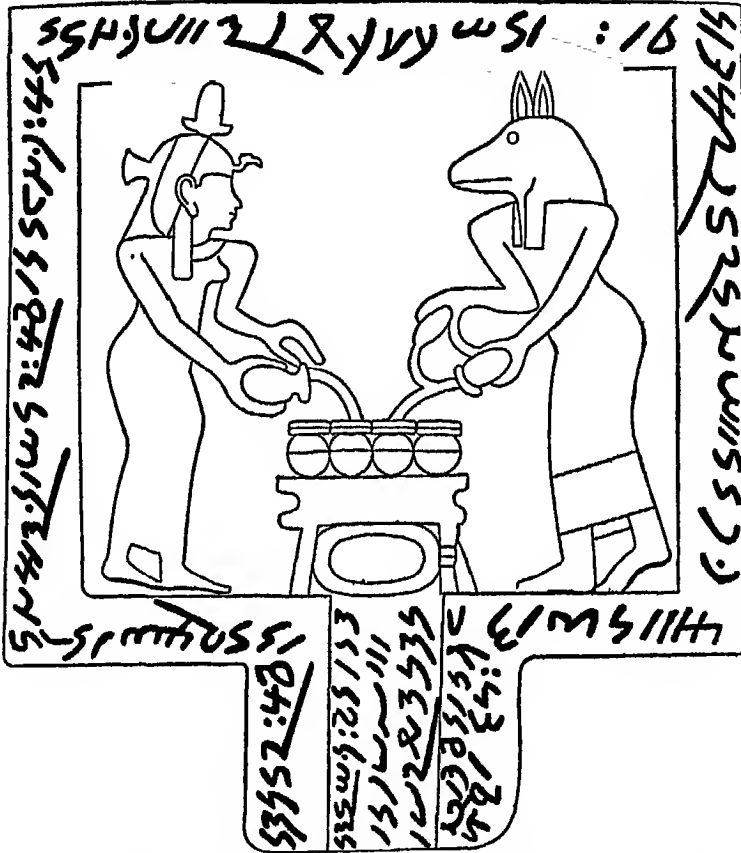
Sepulchral stela of a prince of Meroë with an inscription in the Meroëtic character. In the centre is seated Osiris, who wears the Atef Crown and holds in his hands a whip and a scimitar (?). On the side of his throne is the symbol of the Union of the South and the North. Above him is the solar disk, with a pair of cobras and three pairs of wings, symbolizing Horus of Behuſt (Bdfu). Behind Osiris stands Isis. From the Fourth Pyramid Field at Meroë.

From Lepsius, *Denkmäler*, Abth. vi. No. 10.



## NUBIA

several parts of the Island of Meroë, and visited and described Basa, and the ruins of its temple<sup>1</sup>, and reservoir, the Hawad, Umm Soda and its reservoirs, Gebel Geili, and Murabbaa. His descriptions of these places and his views about the history of the



Tablet for offerings, or altar slab, with an inscription in the Merottic character. The scene on it represents the goddess Isis and Anubis(?) filling the four libation vases with celestial wine. The original is in Berlin (No. 2254).

From Lepsius, *Denkmäler*, Abth. VI. Bl. 9.

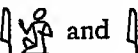


























Merottic kingdom will be found in *The Island of Meroë*, London, 1911, Part I, Chaps. I and II.

<sup>1</sup> The crystalline limestone sundial which he found there is now in the Museum at Khartûm.











# ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

## NUBIAN AND THE MEROÏTIC WRITINGS































In the Vth Abtheilung of his *Denkmäler* Lepsius published a number of inscriptions from temples and other monuments found in the Nile Valley between Aswān and Wādī Ḥalfah, which were written in a character unknown to the early Egyptologists. In the same section of his great work he published the scenes which are cut on the walls of the chapels of the pyramids of Meroë, and their accompanying inscriptions; the inscriptions of the former class are written in a character resembling Demotic, but the latter are in hieroglyphs. Thus it is clear that the kings and queens of Meroë adopted the Egyptian hieroglyphic system of writing, but a short examination of the royal names showed that to some of the hieroglyphs phonetic values different from those which had in Egyptian had been given by the Meroïtes. Thanks to the researches of Prof. F. Ll. Griffith it has been shown that both classes of inscriptions are written in the same language, a fact which Griffith has shown by the equations of texts which he has published. The Meroïtic alphabet has therefore two principal forms, hieroglyphic in which each sign is a picture of some object, and Demotic in which the signs are conventionalized. As all the signs except one are written separately, the script cannot be called cursive. Meroïtic hieroglyphic inscriptions are written from right to left, like the Demotic, and they must be read in the direction towards which the figures face. From the names written in Egyptian hieroglyphs the following phonetic values of signs have been deduced:

- |  |      |   |       |
|--|------|---|-------|
| 1.  and  | = A. | 11.  ,  and  ,  | = S.  |
| 2.    | = Y. | 12.  and    | = SH. |
| 3.  and  | = W. | 13.  and    | = K.  |
| 4.  and  | = B. | 14.  and    | = Q.  |
| 5.  and  | = P. | 15.    | = K.  |
| 6.  and  | = M. | 16.  and    | = T.  |
| 7.  and  | = N. | 17.    | = TH. |

## NUBIA

8.  and  = R, L.    18. ,  = D, DY (?).
9.  and  = H.    19.  = T.
10.  and  = H̄.     = H̄ does not occur.

The Meroitic alphabet formulated by Griffith is as follows:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1.  initial A or N̄.  | 13.  = L.   |
| 2.  = E or YE.  | 14.  ,  = H̄.      |
| 3.  = Ê.  | 15.  = H̄.  |
| 4.  = I or YI.  | 16.  = S.   |
| 5.  = Y.  | 17.  = SH.  |
| 6.  = W.  | 18.  (  ) = K.     |
| 7.  (  ) = B.    | 19.  (  ) = Q.     |
| 8.  = P.  | 20.  (  ) = T (I). |
| 9.  = M.  | 21.  = TE.  |
| 10.  (  ) = N.   | 22.  = TÊ.  |
| 11.  = N̄.   | 23.  = Z (?).   |
| 12.  ,  = R. |  |

For discussions on these alphabets, and on Meroitic inscriptions generally, texts and translations, etc., see Griffith, *Karanôg*, Philadelphia, 1911; *Meroitic Inscriptions*, 2 vols., London, 1911-12; *Meroitic Inscriptions from Faras*, Paris, 1922; *Aeg. Zeit.*, Leipzig, 1911, Bd. 48, p. 67; and *Jnl. Eg. Arch.*, London, 1916-17, vols. III and IV.

### THE EXCAVATIONS OF MEROË

Neither Cailliaud nor Lepsius made any serious excavations at Meroë, and except for the little work there which was done by Ferlini and Stefani in 1832-34 nothing was done to clear the site of the town in the 19th century. In 1898-99 the writer went

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

over the ruins with the map of Erbkam published by Lepsius, and had the sand cleared away from the remains of the temple of Amen, and parts of a wall, intending to excavate a part of the site. But when he tried to get men together to do the digging and clearing, there were no men in the neighbourhood, for Wād an-Nagūmī had reduced the district along the east bank of the Nile to a desert. Every house had been deserted, and in some of them the stone corn-grinders had been left with the grain lying unground upon them. On the approach of the Khalifah's troops the inhabitants had fled *en masse*, taking nothing they could help with them. All hope of making excavations at this time had to be abandoned. About 1904 the natives of Meroe who had escaped slaughter by the Dervishes began to wander back to the villages in the neighbourhood, and they cleared away the "bush" with which the river bank was covered. In 1906-8 the natives began to dig for "anticas" in the ruins at the instigation of professional dealers in Egypt.

In 1909 Prof. J. Garstang and Prof. Sayce began to excavate the site systematically. They found that the temple of Amen lay about half a mile from the river, on the east bank, between the villages of Baqrawiyah and Keyek. In front of it stood a kiosk, about 14 metres long and 11½ metres wide; it was built of stone and had rounded corners. There was a doorway in the west wall of it. In the interior of the building were three pairs of brick pedestals with stone columns upon them, and on the tops of these there probably stood figures of gods in stone or copper. The sides and ends of the kiosk were open. To the west of it, at a distance of about 21 metres, were the remains of the great pylon of the temple. The first hall contained 24 round pillars, and was 64 metres long and 20 metres broad; the south side was splayed out towards the west end. In the centre of this hall was a small shrine or chapel, dating apparently from the time of Netekamen and Tarifamen. The second hall or court contained eight columns which stood on brick bases; the third hall contained six columns, and the fourth four columns, two on each side of the pathway. By the side of each of the two columns on the left was a square altar. The sanctuary lay due west of the fourth hall, and in it stood a square stone altar 3 ft. 6 ins. high. By its side lay two votive tablets, and a stone stele sculptured with magical figures, with inscriptions of a magical

## NUBIA

character, similar to those which are found on the Metternich Stele and other Cippi of Horus. The chamber on the north side of the sanctuary, with door jambs decorated with reliefs and paintings. On the south side of the sanctuary was a second sanctuary with a chamber 12 metres long and 5 metres broad; in the latter were eight round pillars, an altar on the south side, and a flight of steps leading up to a sort of dais. Behind the shrines were three small chambers, which may have been used for the performance of funerary ceremonies. Beyond these were a corridor and a long chamber which was approached by a flight of steps. The temple was built of brick, was about 450 feet long, and enclosed by a temenos wall.

In 1912-13 Professor Garstang continued his excavations, and cleared out a large part of the town which existed in the 1st and 2nd centuries A.D. He discovered the ruins of another temple and of several buildings that were perhaps used as palaces or government buildings, and in one of them was the magnificent bronze head of a Roman Emperor which is now in the Department of Greek and Roman Antiquities in the British Museum. Among other buildings discovered were the ruins of a small sanctuary which lay to the north of the village of Baqrawiyah, and was called by the natives "Kanīṣah," *i.e.* "church." It contained two courts or halls, the larger having eight pillars and the smaller four, and through these access was gained to the sanctuary in which stood the altar resting on tiles. The length of the building was 23 metres, and it suggested that it was dedicated to Isis. The Lion-temple lay to the east of the temple of Amen. It was approached by a flight of steps which was guarded by two lions, and consisted of two square chambers each containing two columns, which stand on brick bases. It was about 23 metres in length. Further eastward still are the ruins of a so-called Sun-temple, which was 33 metres long, and 22 metres broad and was enclosed by a temenos wall; it was entered on the east side. Outside the temenos wall were two kiosks, and within it was a ramp leading to a platform, on which were built cloisters that surrounded the sanctuary. A flight of steps led up to the sanctuary, and the floor and sides of the chamber were covered with plain glazed tiles. At the west end were the remains of an altar. The smaller objects recovered from

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

the excavations are of considerable interest, and many of the painted, egg-shell pottery vessels were unbroken. Several objects and altars, *i.e.* tablets for offerings, were inscribed in the Meroitic character, and it is said that a mass of gold about £4000 in value was discovered in one of the chambers. For descriptions of the excavations see Garstang, *Meroë, the City of the Ethiopians*, Oxford, 1911; and *Annals of Archaeology*, Liverpool, 1910-14.

Nothing found at Meroë during the excavations was older than the 1st century B.C., and most of the objects found belonged to the 1st and 2nd centuries A.D. The idea that Meroë was a great and flourishing city in very early times, and the centre of a great "Ethiopian" kingdom, as some of the classical writers assert, must be abandoned. It is quite possible that it was always an important trading centre, and that caravans from many parts of Africa halted there for business purposes, and that its market was large and important. It is probable that it was an important centre for the cotton trade. The town developed greatly after the downfall of Napata, especially when it became the capital of the south Nubian Kingdom. The power of its kings in the 2nd century A.D. was threatened by the southern peoples who forced their way northwards, and a few of the Merotic reliefs suggest that some of its kings or king-consorts were of Negro extraction. The Merotic power was finally broken by a king of Aksūm, probably about the middle of the 4th century A.D., for Aezanes in one of his inscriptions claims to have conquered Meroë. This matter is referred to in the Chapter on the Kingdom of Aksūm.

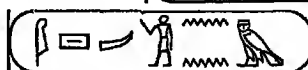
### MEROÏTIC RELIGION

The classical writers tell us that the gods worshipped at Meroë were Isis, Pan, Jupiter, and Hercules, but the monuments prove that the Meroïtes did not confine their adoration to these gods only.






On the temple built by Natak-Amani



and the Queen Amanitēre



at Nagaa there

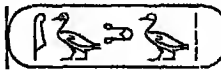

are reliefs of the Lion-god Apezemak,     , Haroëris or Harmakhis, Amen, Khonsu and Khnemu, and the goddesses


<sup>1</sup> These names are to be read from right to left.

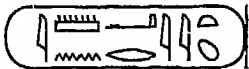


## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

their days, but Osiris was lord not only of their night, but of their existence after death. In the chapel of pyramid No. 1, which was

built for the Candaces (in Merottic , reading from right to left, Kataké, in Egyptian  Kentaki)

called in Merottic  Amani-têre, and in

Egyptian  Amen-âri or Amen-tari, we see a

representation of the Scales of the Judgment Hall of Osiris, and the heart of the deceased being weighed in it against the feather of Maât.

Her mummy is seen lying on a lion-headed bier and Isis and Nephthys stand one at each end of it. Elsewhere is a representation of the setting up of the standard with the box which contains the head of

Osiris, which suggests that the ceremonies connected with "setting up" the Tet of Osiris which were performed annually at Abydos

were reproduced by the priests of the dead at Meroë. Here appear the gods Anpu (Anubis) and Upuatu, and the Four Sons of Horus,

and though the inscriptions were written by men who were not well acquainted with Egyptian, and are of a late date, it is quite

clear that the Vignettes were copied from papyri, probably codices of the Saite Recension of the Book of the Dead, of the late Saite

or Ptolemaic period. There is evidence that the artist did not always know what he was copying, e.g. the skin of the pied bull

which is seen suspended on a pole in the Vignettes of the shrine of Osiris in the funerary papyri. A mutilated inscription describes

the queen's conquests and states that she conquered her enemies, and took from them gold and silver and very much spoil.

On the walls of another chapel (pyramid No. 2) is a copy of the "false door" of Egyptian tombs, on which was painted a triad of

gods. The queen for whom this chapel was built was a lover of good cattle, for on its north wall are sculptured several figures of bulls of

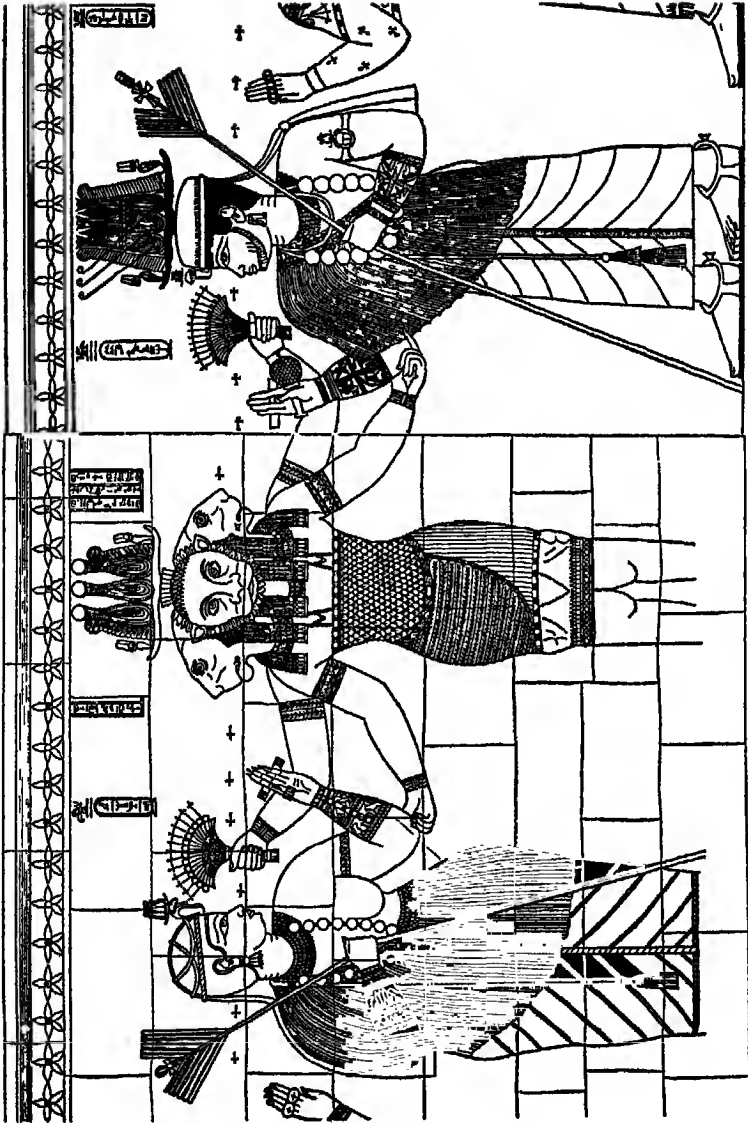
a fine Sūdānī breed. In another (No. 4) the prince is seen sitting upon a throne with his dog at his feet, and behind him stands the

goddess Isis. Anubis is present preparing funerary unguents, and a priest is seen loading a tablet for offerings with bread, geese, etc.

Another priest presents a censer in which is burning incense.



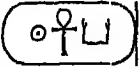

# NUBIA

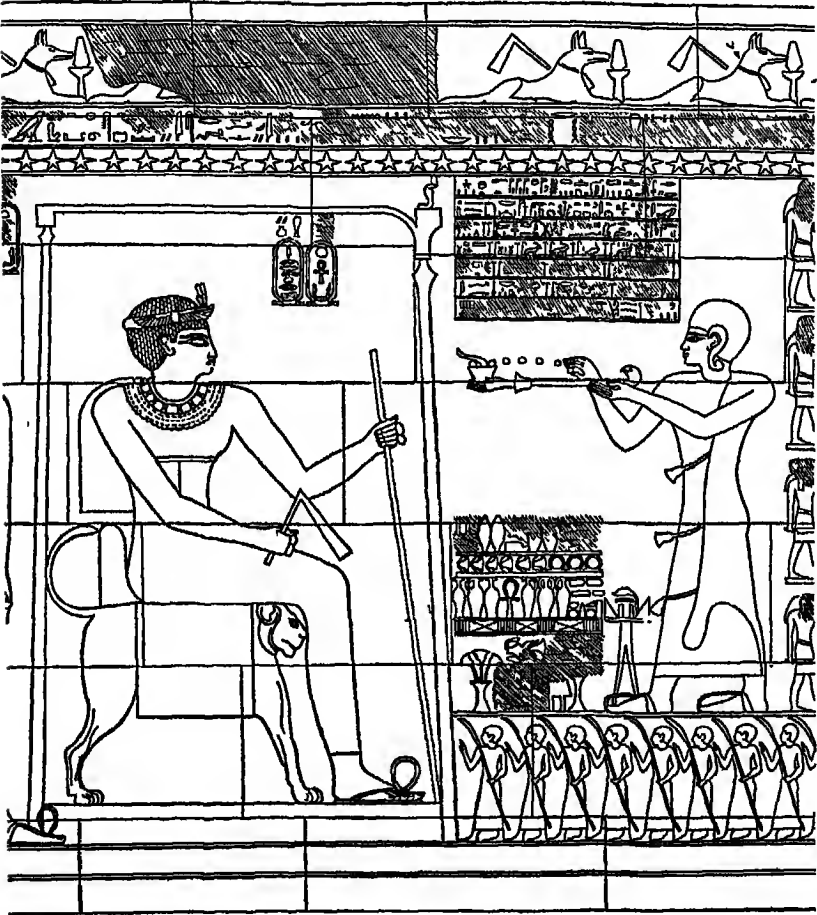


Scene from the large temple (A) at Nagna (West wall), Netek-Amen and his Queen Armentari worshipping the three-headed Lion-god. From Lepsius, *Denkmäler*, Abth. v. Bl. 59.

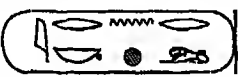
## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

Another pyramid (No. 5), well illustrates the hold which the religion of Osiris had taken upon the rulers of Meroë. The king or prince for whom it was made adopted the prenomen Ānkh-Ka-Rā

() , and he bore two names, Pekerter ()

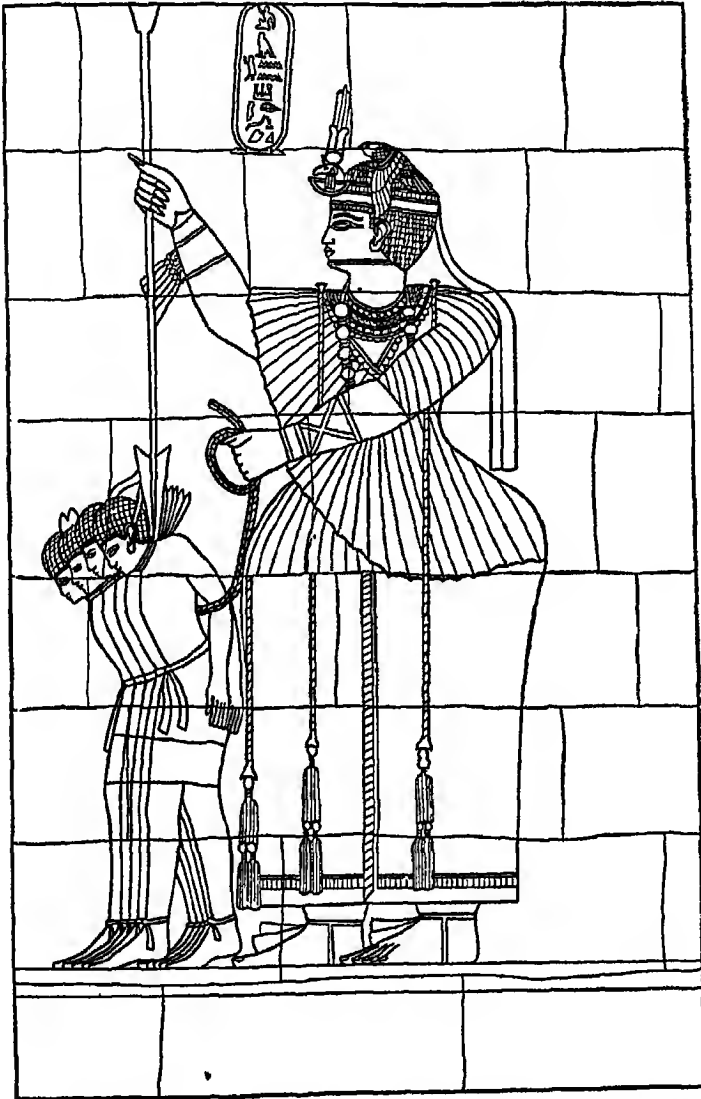


A priest offering incense to Arkenkherel, a king of Meroë. The reliefs in this king's pyramid-tomb were probably made by Egyptian workmen who were imported for the purpose.  
From Lepsius, *Denkmäler*, Abth. v. Bl. 54.

and Arkenkherel () ; as an ecclesiastic, he was the second prophet of Osiris. On the walls of the chapel we see a priest offering incense, and making offerings to the gods of the Tuat or

## NUBIA

Underworld, to Osiris and to Isis. Next we have a copy of the series of Vignettes of Chapter CXLIV of the Book of the Dead, the

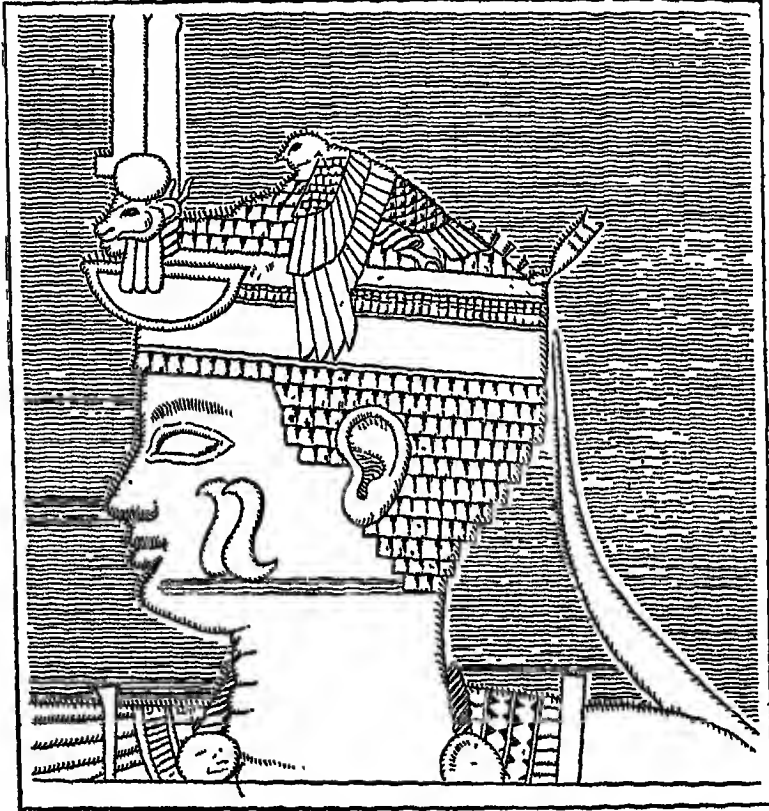


Amani-Shakhatē, Queen of Meroë, who built pyramid No. 6, spearing captives.  
From Lepsius, *Denkmäler*, Abth. v. Bl. 40.


Judgment Scene from the same work, together with a version of the Chapter of the Heart (xxx, B), and it is quite clear that these

# ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

were copied from an Egyptian papyrus. It is probable that the whole of the work in the interior of the chapel was done by Egyptian funerary artists who were specially imported from the north for the purpose. The inscriptions are characteristic of the



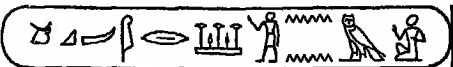
Portrait of Amani-Shakhatē, Queen of Meroe.

Graeco-Roman Period in Egypt, and it is interesting to note that Thoth is called the "twice great" .

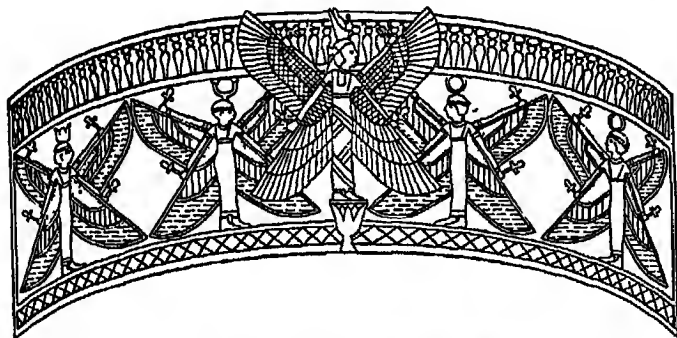
In many of the chapels the goddess Isis appears in prominent positions, and this is not surprising when we remember that the principle of matriarchy has always been honoured in the Nile Valley. A




## NUBIA

good example of the figures of Isis is found in the chapel of Queen Amani-Shakhatē (No. 6)



where the goddess has wings to her arms and legs in addition to the great horizontal wings. The queen wears the characteristic headdress of Isis and the horns of Amen, and like any of the old Pharaohs of Egypt is represented holding by cords prisoners of various nations into one of which she is driving a spear or javelin. On the north wall of the chapel is a scene in which the family of the great queen are seen bringing funerary offerings, and here too is the Great Balance of the Judgment Scene of the Book of the



Gold armlet with figures of winged goddesses. The goddess in the centre stands on a lotus flower , and wears on her head the double crown  of the South and the North. Each of the other goddesses has on her head the lunar disk and horns, and holds the symbol of life  in each hand. Found in a pyramid at Meroe. (Ferlini Collection.)

Dead in which the heart was weighed; in the middle of the beam sits the baboon, the well-known associate of Thoth. All the other details of the Judgment Scene are wanting. Thus it seems that the queen accepted the idea of the weighing of the heart in the Balance of the Judgment Hall, but rejected the other details of the Judgment which are set forth with such prominence in Egyptian papyri. The pyramid of this queen was greatly damaged by Ferlini. This enterprising treasure hunter for some reason believed that it contained gold jewellery, and he demolished the upper part of it and actually found it. The necklaces, pendants, bracelets, etc. are

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS



Gold hinged armlet decorated with a figure of the goddess Nut (?), who wears the double crown and stands on a lotus flower, rectangular plaques engraved with figures of goddesses wearing disks and plumes, and rows of diamond-shaped and circular ornaments. Found in a pyramid at Meroe. (Ferlini Collection.)






Head of Dionysos.


From the handle of a bronze vessel found in a pyramid at Meroe by Ferlini. (Ferlini Collection.)

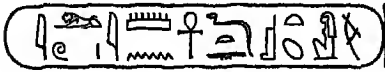
## NUBIA

beautiful specimens of the goldsmith's art, and nothing so beautiful as these has been found since. Ferlini sold his "find" to the Royal Museum in Berlin and to the Antiquarium in Munich; reproductions of some of the objects will be found in Lepsius, *Denkmaler*, Abth. v. Bl. 42, and for descriptions of the objects in Munich see the official *Fuhrer* by W. Christ, Director of the Antiquarium, Munich, 1901. Drawings of the best examples of the jewellery will be found in Budge, *The Egyptian Sūdān*, vol. I. p. 299 f.

The scenes and texts found in the chapel of No. 7 are such as we should expect to find in a tomb of the late Saite or Ptolemaic period. Here we have the "false door," so made as to resemble three or four "false doors," on which is a figure of Osiris standing between Isis and Nephthys. Over the door is the Boat of the Sun, which shows that the cult of Rā went hand in hand with the cult of Osiris, in which are the Nile-god Hāpi, the Crocodile-god Sebek, and the Hippopotamus-goddess Taurit. The king for whom the pyramid was built is seen in mummified form wearing the Atef crown of Osiris, and his soul is represented as a man-headed hawk . Close by is a group of eight gods, each armed with two knives, who were guardians of pylons in the Kingdom of Osiris. Then come scenes of Anubis addressing the king's mummy, a priest watering and censuring a sacred tree, a priest setting up an obelisk before a funerary temple on which rest the Benu bird of Heliopolis , and the hawk of Rā-Harmakhis . This scene is the Vignette of Chap. XLVII of the Book of the Dead, and is followed by the Vignette of Chap. LVII or LIX (the king drinking water from the tree of Hathor), the Vignettes of Chap. XLV, and Chap. XLIII, which were written to prevent the body decaying in the tomb and the cutting off of the head of the deceased. Another Vignette (Chap. CVII) represents the king going in and out, as and when he pleases, of the Tuat, where he joins the followers of Rā and becomes an associate of the souls of Amentet. Elsewhere we see the Sem priest clad in a Leopard's skin performing the appointed ceremonies, and rows of gods, among them Menu, ithyphallic, and Nefer-Tem, and extracts from ancient Egyptian texts, e.g. "The gates of the eastern horizon are opened to thee,

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS






thou findest Rā there, and he embraces thee, O Lord of the Two Lands." It is interesting to note that the prayer for funerary offerings for the Ka of the king is preceded by the formula  "the king gives an offering" which shows that the draughtsman and scribe did not understand the meaning of these words. In early times the king of Egypt sent gifts of funerary offerings to his dead officials, and later, by courtesy, he was assumed to do so for every one of his people who was buried. But the idea of the king of Egypt sending a funerary gift to a king of Meroe at this time, or of the king of Meroe sending a funerary gift to his own funeral, would seem to be absurd. This pyramid was made for King Aru-Amen who calls himself "ever-living, beloved of Isis"



But in his inscriptions there is another cartouche preceded by the title "Lord of the Two Lands



Muttek" Now the words "ever-living, beloved of Isis" seem to indicate that he lived in the time of the Ptolemies, in whose cartouches they are often found. Griffith (*ibid.* p. 26) thinks that the sign @, which comes in both cartouches, has some special phonetic value here, possibly *g* Δ, and he would read the names Arq-Amani (Ergamenes?) and Meqel-take.

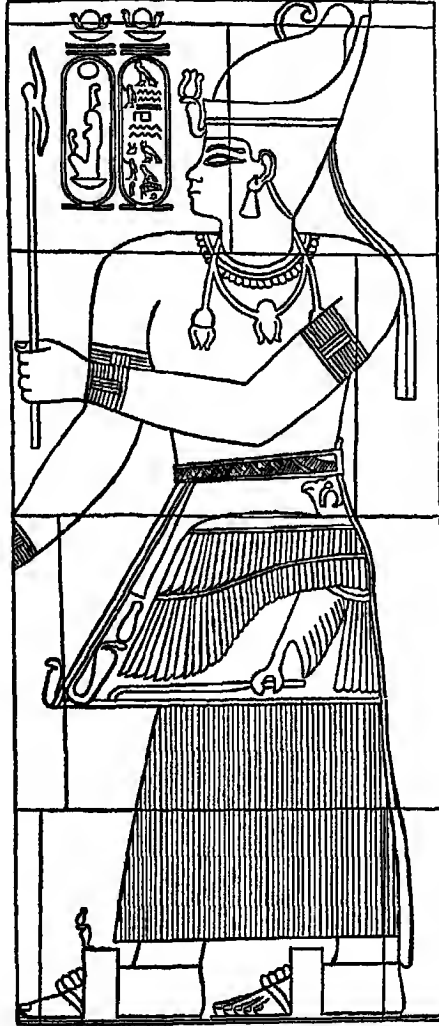
The objects found during the excavation of the chapels of pyramid No. 11 (which is the largest of the pyramids at Meroe<sup>1</sup>, and was built for a queen), and others, show that every chapel was provided with a tablet in stone or glazed earthenware and similar in shape to the Egyptian . Whether offerings were brought and laid upon it daily, morning and evening, or only on days of festival cannot be said. A fine collection of such tables for offerings is reproduced and described by Griffith (*Karandg*, Philadelphia, 1911, Pls. 1 ff.), and they resemble closely those of Egypt. The inscriptions are of course in the Merotic and Nubian character. Many have rectangular hollows sunk in the upper surface, and within these figures of libation vases  and bread cakes ●●●● or   
, lotuses  are sculptured in relief. On one example

<sup>1</sup> The length of the monument, with pylon and forecourt, is about 145 feet.



## NUBIA

(Pl. 26, No. 8) the sign of "life"  $\text{𓂀}$  is sculptured. The presentation of vases of "cool water" was an important feature of the cult of the dead,

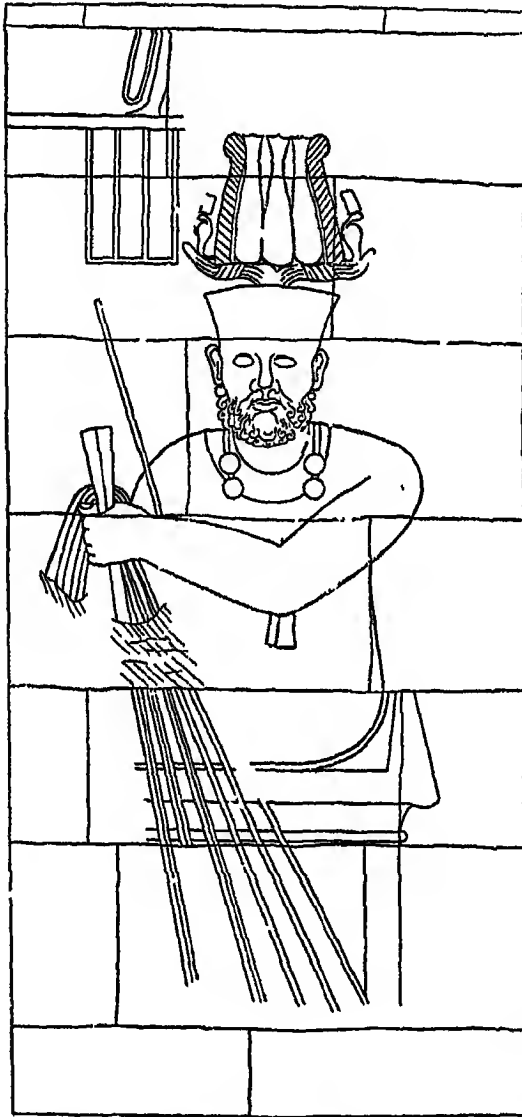


A king of Meroe who adopted Neb-maät-Rā, the prenomen of Amenhetep III, as his prenomen. His native Meroitic name is given in the right-hand cartouche. He built pyramid No 17 (Lepsius No 30).

From Lepsius, *Denkmäler*, Abth. v. Bl 51.

which was observed in the same way as in Egypt. In the chapel of No. 11 the figure of a stone hawk, symbolic of Horus, and a

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

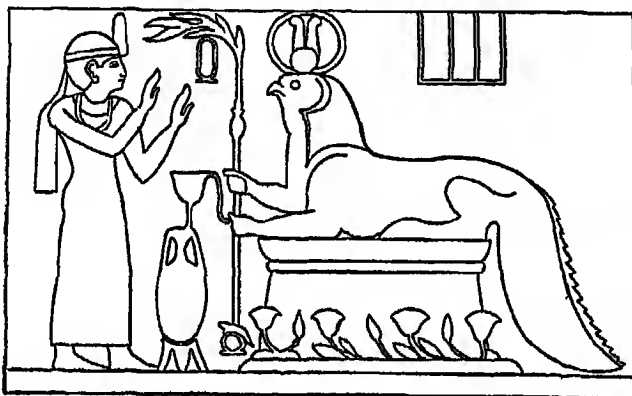


A god worshipped at Nagaa (Jupiter Sarapis?). The god wears a triple crown composed of the horns of the Ram-god of the Sūdān, the plumes of Amen-Rā, and the Cobras of the South and North wearing disks. From Lepsius, *Denkmäler*, Abth. v. Bl. 64.

## NUBIA

group of deities, Osiris, and Isis, and Nephthys, were found. Bulls were sacrificed as funerary offerings, and it is possible that they were slaughtered during the performance of ceremonies similar to those which are described in the Book of Opening the Mouth.

From what has been said above it is clear that the Meroitic Religion was a modified form of that of the Egyptians of the latest period of Egyptian history. To all intents and purposes the principal gods of Meroë were the Sun-god Rā or Amen-Rā and Osiris, and if Jupiter, or perhaps Jupiter Serapis was known to the Meroites, as a sculpture at Nagaa (see Lepsius, *Abth. v. Bl. 64*)



A king of Meroë adoring a hawk-headed, human-handed crocodile, wearing a circular plaque on which are represented the solar disk and plumes. The hands of the god grasp the palm branch which, resting on the frog and circle, symbolizes the "millions of years" which he is going to add to the king's life. The jar on the tripod contains the wine which the king offers to the god.

From Lepsius, *Denkmäler*, *Abth. v. Bl. 65*.

suggests, one aspect of him would represent Amen or Amen-Rā to them, and the other Serapis, the god of Death and the Underworld of both Greeks and Egyptians. All the essential features of the religion of Osiris were accepted, and the Meroites hoped to obtain resurrection and immortality through him. The frequent representation of the Great Balance on the walls of the chapels of the pyramids proves that the doctrine of the judgment of the dead was accepted by the royal personages and court officials of Meroë. And though the boat of Rā often appears also on the walls, the Vignettes from the Book of the Dead indicate that they preferred the heaven of material happiness and delights which was promised to the

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

followers of Osiris to the more spiritual heaven which the followers of Rā believed they would find in the Boat of Millions of Years and in his kingdom. At present no evidence exists showing that the Meroites mummified their dead; they probably wrapped them in cloth or skins and laid them in chambers or in the earth. No bodies have been found in the chapels: it is possible that they were placed there, but were afterwards broken up and thrown out by tomb robbers. As Ferlini found human bones in one pyramid, and a funerary bier in another (see Budge, *Egyptian Sūdān*, vol. I. pp. 288-290), we may assume that the bodies of royal personages were laid either in the end chambers of the chapels, or in or under the pyramids.

About the rites and ceremonies of what may be termed "public worship" which were performed at Meroë we know nothing, but as the Sun-god was the chief object of veneration we may assume that the priests of Meroë copied the form of worship of Rā or Amen-Rā which was prevalent at that time in Egypt. The remains of the temples at Nagaa and in the Wādī aṣ-Ṣufra, some 50 miles to the south of Meroë, show that these buildings resembled in form and internal arrangement the temples of Nubia. Plans of these temples will be found in my *Egyptian Sūdān*, vol. II, p. 129 ff., together with a general description of them. The temples at Wādī aṣ-Ṣufra are found within an enclosure, originally walled, which measures about 700 feet by 660 feet. (See Cailliaud, *Voyage*, plate XXX, No. 9.) Here are the remains of three temples, the largest of which consisted of a single chamber, containing six columns, and was entered through a pylon. Until the whole site is excavated it will be impossible to say what purpose was served by the miscellaneous buildings which once stood side by side with the temples. The confusion now existing here is absolutely chaotic, but every here and there among the ruins are mutilated reliefs and columns which are of considerable interest. These show that their sculptors were master craftsmen, who were not content to copy slavishly the designs which are usually found on the walls and columns of the great Nubian and Meroitic temples. Of special interest are the large number of mythical and fabulous animals which are sculptured on the lower parts of the column; among them are the following:

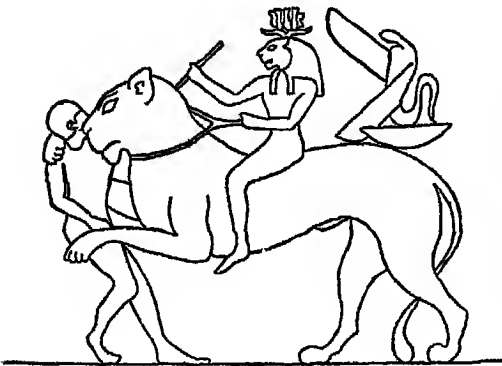
## NUBIA



The ram-headed god Khnemu ( $\chi\rho\nu\nu\alpha\iota\varsigma$ ) holding a child's hand in his right hand, and leading by a string a winged lioness, with her tail curl between her hind legs. The right fore paw of the beast rests upon the bodies of two stricken gazelles.



A winged hawk-headed lion, symbolic of the king, with its right fore paw crushing a prostrate foe of the king. On the lion's head is the Atef Crown of Egypt, which is composed of the White Crown of the South with the plumes of Amen-Râ, and the protecting cobras of the South and North wearing disks, and the horns of the old Ram-god Khnemu.

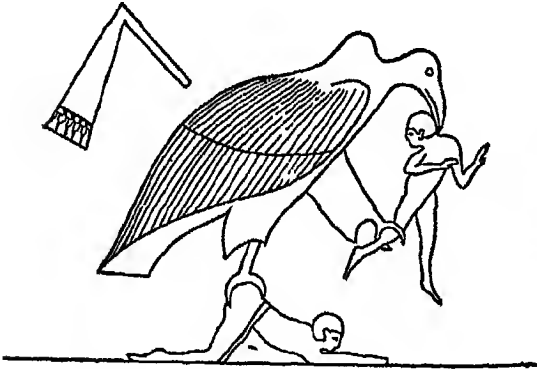


A lion-headed god (Maa-ḥes?), armed with the Sūdānī cudgel, riding a lion, which is gnawing the body of an enemy of the king held between its fore paws. Behind the god is the winged cobra symbolic of the great Cobra-goddess Uatchit.

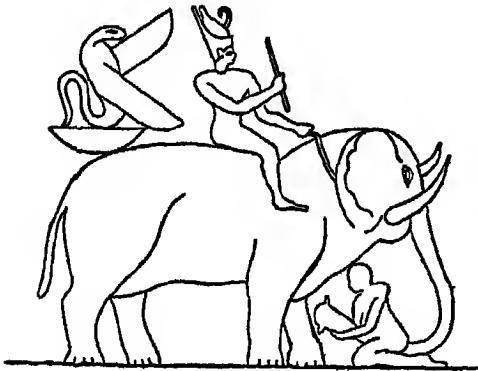
## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS



A hawk-headed god, Rā, or one of the forms of Horus, wearing the solar disk, and riding a winged lioness, with a woman's head surmounted by a disk. The lioness symbolizes a Sūdānī goddess, and she is crushing two gazelles under her right fore paw.



The Vulture-goddess (Nekhbit or Mut), an ancient Mother-goddess of the South, tearing with her beak one enemy of the king whilst she stands perched upon the body of another.



The king, wearing the double crown of the South and the North, riding an elephant, the trunk of which is being held by a kneeling slave. Behind the king is the Cobra-goddess Uatchit.

## NUBIA



The Sūdāni-god Bes, wearing the plumed headdress of the Sūdān and a tail, playing a harp. The lion, seated and wearing the triple-crown and smelling a flower, symbolizes the king.

### NUBIA UNDER THE ROMANS

During the reign of Augustus the building of the great temple at Talmis (Kalābshah) was begun, and repairs and additions to the temples of Dendūr and Dakkah were made. Under Claudius (A.D. 41-45) the Romans took steps to develop the trade of Egypt with countries further east, and it seems that, about this time, they turned their attention to the gold mining industry in the Eastern Desert. Nero (A.D. 54-68) conceived the idea of invading Ethiopia, by which he meant the country to the south of Nubia and not Abyssinia, but as no one was able to give him exact information about the region we now call the "Sūdān," he sent there some praetorian soldiers under the command of a tribune to report<sup>1</sup> upon it. The expedition seems to have travelled from Syene to Meroë by way of the river, for it reported that the distance between the two towns was 875 miles. To-day the distance between Aswān (Syene) and Meroë by the desert route across the Abu Hamid Desert is estimated to be about 680 miles, whilst by river it is about 200 miles more. From Meroë they went southwards, but the two centurions do not say how far. They must have travelled up the White Nile for a very considerable distance, for they told Seneca that, after journeying for an immense distance, they arrived at some marshes of enormous extent, that these had no outlet, and that the muddy water was covered over with an entangled mass of

<sup>1</sup> Certe solitudines nuper renuntiavere principi Neroni missi ab eo milites praetoriani cum tribuno ad explorandum, inter reliqua bella et Aethiopicum cogitanti. Pliny VI. 35.

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

weed, which it was impossible to wade through or to sail over<sup>1</sup>. From this it is clear that the Roman soldiers reached the region of the Sadd, which begins a little to the north of Bōr, where the whole country becomes a swamp, which reaches as far south as the Uganda Protectorate. The two rocks through which the river rushed with tremendous force cannot be identified with certainty, but it is possible that the centurions saw and heard the Fola Rapids. Here the river drops in two falls between 15 and 20 feet, and then rushes down an extremely narrow gorge with a very heavy slope, enclosed between vertical walls of rocks. The water tears through this channel in a glassy green sheet with an incredible velocity, and leaps into a deep cavity about 170 feet long and 40 feet wide (Garstin, *Report on the Basin of the Upper Nile*, p. 82).

For the next two hundred years (A.D. 60–260) the Romans contented themselves with developing the district between Syene and Dakkah, and Trajan, Hadrian, and Verus repaired or built additions to the temples of Philae and Kalābshah. South of Premnis (Ibrīm) the Nubians seem to have been allowed to do much as they pleased. Roman merchants had by this time discovered the old caravan roads from the Nile to the rich districts of Dār Fūr and Kordofān, and the Emperors Vespasian and Titus built or rebuilt the temples in the Oasis of Dākhlā in the Western Desert, no doubt with the idea of establishing friendly relations with the tribes there and further south for the purposes of trade. In the beginning of the 3rd century the tribes of the Eastern Desert who are grouped under the name of "Blemmyes" banded themselves together with the Egyptians of the Thebaid, and began to invade the southern frontier of Egypt. They are the Beja of Arab writers, and are represented to-day by the Bishārīn. Pro-

<sup>1</sup> Seneca says: "Ego quidem centuriones duo, quos Nero Caesar, aut aliarum virtutum, ita veritatis in primis amantissimus, ad investigandum caput Nili miserat, audiui narantes, longum illos iter peregrisse, quum a rege Aethiopiae instructi auxilio, commendatique proximis regibus, penetrassent. Ad ulteriora equidem, aiebant, pervenimus, ad immensas paludes, quarum exitum nec incolae noverant, nec sperare quisquam potest. Ita implicitae aquis herbae sunt, et aquae nec pediti eluctabiles nec navigio, quod nisi parvum et unius capax limosa et obsita palus non ferat. Ibi, inquit, vidimus duas petras, ex quibus ingens vis fluminis excidebat." (*Naturalium Quaestionum*, VI. 8, ed. Koeler, p. 163.)



## NUBIA


fessedly they were pastoral peoples, but they were savage and ferocious, and robbed caravans, and were a terror to all merchants. Their appearance was wild and terrifying, like that of the modern Anaks, and they were regarded as men who were partly negroes and partly apes, and were grouped with the Satyrs, Aegipans, and



A king or prince of Meroë receiving a bow and arrows from one of the Sun-gods worshipped at Meroë, Roman Period. From a relief discovered by J. W. Crowfoot, Esq., C.B.E., at Gebel Geili.

Himantopodes. Pliny says (v. 8) that they were supposed to have no mouths and to have eyes in their breasts (*Blemmyis traduntur capita abesse ore et oculis pectori adfixis*). At the end of the 3rd century the Blemmyes plundered the villages of Upper Egypt, and though they were driven back by Marcus Julius Aemilianus,

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

they made themselves masters of Upper Egypt in the reign of Aurelian (A.D. 270-275). In the reign of Diocletian (284-305) the Roman garrisons at Syene and in the Dodekaschoinos, being unable to stop the raids of the Blemmyes, were withdrawn, and the emperor placed the protection of Roman interests in Northern Nubia in the hands of the Nobatae, or peoples of the Western Desert, who were the bitter enemies of the Blemmyes. The settlements of the Nobatae extended from Dār Fūr and Kordofān to the Oasis of Khārgah, and as all the trade of the southern Sūdān was in their hands, it was important for the extension of Roman trade in the south for the Romans to be on good terms with them. They were the descendants of the Mentiu  or "Cattle-men," who were a terror to the Pharaohs of old, and the Baḳḳārah or "Cattle-men" of our own time in the Sūdān have inherited all the ferocity of their ancestors. Whether called Mentiu or Nobatae, Diocletian gave the Nobatae lands on which they might settle near Elephantine, and a yearly sum of money in return for the guardianship of Upper Egypt and of Lower Nubia. He also gave a yearly subsidy to the Blemmyes on the condition that they ceased to raid Egyptian territory, and pillage Egyptian caravans.

Diocletian then built a strong fortress on an island near Elephantine and set up in or near it a temple and altars where the Romans and Barbarians might meet on friendly terms, and swear oaths of loyalty to each other in the presence of the priests of their various gods. The Nobatae and Blemmyes worshipped Isis, Osiris, and Priapus (Menu?), and the latter sacrificed men to the Sun-god. By playing off one set of savage tribes against the other Diocletian secured peace for Egypt at a comparatively small expense. This arrangement worked very well for one hundred years or more, and both the Nobatae and the Blemmyes kept their agreement with the Romans. But in the reign of Theodosius II (A.D. 408-450) the Blemmyes invaded Egyptian territory and took possession of the Oasis of Khārgah, made prisoners many of the inhabitants, and defeated the Roman soldiers who were stationed there. A few years later Maximinus, commander of the Roman forces in Egypt, marched to the south, routed the Blemmyes and Nobatae with

## NUBIA

great slaughter, and made them set free their prisoners and pay a heavy fine for their breach of contract. Maximinus compelled them to give hostages for their future good behaviour, and to enter into an agreement to keep the peace for one hundred years. This they agreed to do provided that they were allowed to make pilgrimages to the temple of Isis at Philae, and to borrow the statue of Isis to carry about the country so that the people everywhere might be able to entreat the goddess for protection and for offspring. To this the Roman general agreed, and as long as he lived the Romans had no trouble with either the Blemmyes or the Nobatae. On his death, however, they joined forces and invaded Egypt, and recovered their hostages, but they were soon reduced to obedience by Florus, Prefect of Alexandria.

Towards the close of the reign of Justinian I (A.D. 527–565) the period of one hundred years expired and it seems as if the great nomad tribes began to trouble the Romans again. Philae, where the tribes came to worship Isis, was believed by the emperor to have become a hotbed of unrest and conspiracy, and he determined to abolish the worship of Isis. He sent one Narses to Philae to carry out his wishes, and the temple of Isis was closed, and the statues of the gods were carried off to Constantinople. Narses confiscated the revenues of the sanctuary of Isis and threw her priests into prison (Procopius, *De Bello Persico*, I. 20). Under Tiberius II (A.D. 578–582) Aristomachus crushed a revolt of the Blemmyes and Nobatae, and for about a century there seems to have been peace, probably because the Romans were fully occupied in keeping the Persians out of Egypt.

### NUBIA UNDER THE ARABS

‘Amr ibn al-‘Āsi, general of the Khalifah ‘Umar or ‘Omar, captured the Fortress of Babylon in Egypt on the 9th of April, A.D. 641, and thus Nubia became a province of the Muḥammadan Empire. About one year later ‘Amr sent an expedition into Nubia under the command of ‘Abd Allāh bin Sa’d, whose army contained 20,000 men (Shoucair, *History of the Sūdān* [in Arabic], vol. II. p. 42). The Arabs established themselves at Aswān, but when ‘Abd Allāh returned to Cairo, the Nubians invaded Upper Egypt and laid waste the country far and wide. In 652 ‘Abd Allāh went

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

back to Nubia, and crushed the rebellion of the Nubians mercilessly. The Nubians had embraced Christianity under Silco, the king of the Blemmyes about A.D. 450, and had made Old Dongola their capital. Thither went 'Abd Allāh and pulled down all the buildings, including the church, and then Koleydozo the king submitted to the Arabs, who made peace with him on the understanding that he paid annually the Bākṭ or tribute which had been fixed by 'Amr. This tribute consisted of 365 slaves for 'Amr, 40 for the governor of Egypt, 20 for the governor of Aswān, 5 for the judge, and 12 for the inspectors of the slaves, and all these had to be delivered at Al-Ḳasr near Philae. 'Abd Allāh made a treaty with the king, a translation of which will be found in my *Egyptian Sūdān*, vol. II. p. 186. The Bākṭ was paid regularly by the Nubians for a period of 600 years, and each year they sent in addition 40 slaves as a present, and received in return wheat, barley, wine, horses and stuffs. In 722 Cyriacus, king of Nubia, marched into Egypt with an army of 100,000 men to avenge the insult which the Arabs had inflicted on the Christians, but at the urgent request of the Patriarch, who was hastily released from prison, he withdrew to his own country. In 831 the Beja revolted and 'Abd Allāh ibn Jahān marched against them and defeated them in battle several times, and made a treaty with Kanūn their king, who lived at Hejer, and who promised to pay a tribute of 100 camels or 300 dīnārs (about £150). Kanūn undertook to respect the lives and properties of the Muslims, and not to speak contemptuously of Muḥammad, the Prophet, or his Ḳur'ān, or the religion of God. In 833 Zakarya, king of the Nubians, decided to cease paying the Bākṭ, and was prepared to fight the Khalīfah Mu'tasim (833-842) over the matter. He sent his son Fēraki to discuss it with the Khalīfah, and in the end the Khalīfah ordered that the Bākṭ should be paid triannually. In 854 the Beja refused to pay their tribute, and they and the Nubians slew all the Egyptians who were working the emerald mines in the Eastern Desert, invaded Upper Egypt and looted Edfū, Asnā and many villages. When the Khalīfah Al-Mutawakkil received at Baghdād the report of these proceedings from 'Ambasa, governor of Egypt, he determined to crush the revolt with a high hand. In the end the Muslims were victorious and 'Alī Bābā, the king of Nubia, was compelled to sue for peace.

## NUBIA

In 950 the Nubians attacked the Arab garrison at Aswān and slew many men, but the Muslim general defeated the rebels, and captured many of them and sent them to Cairo, where they were beheaded. In 969 Jawhar, the governor of Egypt, sent a mission to George, king of Nubia, to receive the Bākṭ, and an invitation to him to embrace Islām; the tribute was paid, but George remained a Christian. In 1005 the Nubians joined forces with Abū Rakwah, who had overrun Egypt, and defeated the Khalīfah's troops at Jizah, but the Muslims defeated them and the head of the leader of the revolt and the heads of 30,000 of his followers were sent to Cairo, and paraded on the backs of camels through all the towns in Syria, and then thrown into the Euphrates. In 1173 Tūrān Shāh, the elder brother of Saladin, invaded Nubia and besieged Ibrīm. The Nubians were defeated, their town destroyed, and the whole population were made prisoners. The cross from the dome of the church, which was promptly destroyed, was burnt, and the bishop was examined by torture and cast into prison. The 700 pigs that were found in the town were killed, being regarded as unclean animals by the Muslims.

Kanz ad-Dawlah, the Nubian governor of Aswān, rebelled in 1174, but Saladin's troops crushed the revolt; then for about 20 years there was peace between the Arabs and Nubians. On the death of Saladin the port of Aswān became deserted, and the town decayed. In 1275 the Arabs annexed Nubia. Dāwūd its king had refused to pay the Bākṭ, and broke the agreement which had been made with the Nubians by 'Amr in many ways. The Arabs marched into Nubia, defeated Dāwūd's troops, and set up Shakanda, a nephew of Dāwūd, as king of Nubia. He agreed to pay as Bākṭ 3 elephants, 3 giraffes, 2 panthers, 100 good camels, and 400 cows. He also agreed to pay one dīnār as poll-tax for every adult male of the population. The Arabs then destroyed all the churches, and carried off everything of value which they found in them. In 1287 Al-Mansūr sent an expedition into Nubia, which raided the country for a distance of 15 days' journey south of Dongola. He established a garrison in Dongola, but as soon as the Arabs departed, the Nubians expelled the soldiers from it. Al-Mansūr sent a second expedition into Nubia, and as soon as the Arabs entered the country they massacred every one they met, burned the water-

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

wheels and fed their horses on the crops. When they reached Dongola they found the town deserted, for Shemamūn its king had fled with his followers, and they appointed a nephew of Dāwūd king. When the Arabs departed Shemamūn reappeared with an army, and attacked the palace, captured the new king, and inflicted a cruel death upon him. Shemamūn then wrote an account of what he had done and sent it to Al-Mansūr, with rich gifts, and remained king of Nubia. Between 1311 and 1412 fighting went on between the Arabs and the Nubians, either about the payment of the Bākṭ or the appointment of rival candidates to the throne of Nubia, but about the latter year the great tribe, the Awlād Kenz, became masters of a large part of Upper Egypt and Nubia, and the Arabs were unable to maintain their authority in any place south of the Thebaid. And until 1517, when Selim conquered Egypt, the Awlād Kenz were the rulers of Nubia.

The Christian kingdom of Nubia came to an end partly through internal dissensions, and partly through the attacks of peoples on all sides of it whose interest it was to see it disappear. The Arab tribes, assisted by the powerful negro tribe of the Fungs, gave it its death-blow. The strength of the latter people increased as the power of the Arabs declined, and with the downfall of the towns of Dongola on the Nile and Sōbah on the Blue Nile, and the destruction of the Christian population generally, the negro tribes became the greatest power in Nubia and the Northern Sūdān. The Fungs, whose origin is unknown, made Sennaar their capital, and their kingdom extended from the head of the Third Cataract in the north to Fā-Zō'g'li in the south, and from Sawākin on the Red Sea in the east to the Nile on the west. Thus it included the old region of Kash, or Kūsh, which is to-day represented by the Dongola Province of the Anglo-Egyptian Sūdān. The first king of the Fungs was Amāra Dunkas, and he began to reign about A.D. 1515. When Selim conquered Egypt and invaded Abyssinia Amāra Dunkas wrote to him and told him that he and his people were Arabs who had embraced Islām, and he sent with his letter a series of genealogical tables compiled by an Imām of Sennaar called Al-Samarkandi, which proved the descent of the Fungs from the Arabs. But there seems to be no truth in the claim of Amāra Dunkas to Arab descent, and it is tolerably certain that the Fungs

## NUBIA

only embraced Islām as a political necessity. Be this as it may, the diplomacy of the Fung king was successful, for Selim only took possession of Northern Nubia as far as the Third Cataract, and Amāra Dunkas ruled the Nile Valley from the Third Cataract to Sennaar. The successors of Amāra Dunkas were:—‘Abd al-Kāder I, 1534-1544; Nail, his brother, 1544-1555; Amāra ibn Sakākin, his brother, 1555-1563; Dakin ibn Nail, 1563-1578; Tabal, 1578-1589; Unsa I, 1589-1599; ‘Abd al-Kāder II, 1599-1605; ‘Adlān ibn Aba 1605-1612; Bādī, 1612-1615; Rabāt, 1615-1643; Bādī “the Bearded,” 1643-1678. [This king conquered the Shilluks and captured many slaves. He was a patron of learning, and fond of learned men, and built a mosque in Sennaar.] Ansa II, 1678-1689; Bādī “the Red,” 1689-1715; Ansa III, 1715-1718 [he was deposed]; Nūl, 1718-1724; Bādī abu-Shallūkh, 1724-1762. [Īyāsū, king of Abyssinia, invaded Sennaar, but was defeated with great slaughter; in the reign of Bādī, M. du Roule was murdered at Sennaar]; Nāser 1762-1769; Ismā‘īl 1769-1778; and ‘Adlān II, 1778-1789, the last of the Fung kings. In the period of anarchy which now began we have Awkal, 1789; Tabal II, 1789; Bādī V, 1789; Hasab-raba, 1790; Nawwar, 1790; Bādī VI, 1791-1821; Ranfī and Bādī VII. The kings of Shendi were 16 in number and reigned 236 years.

Soon after Selim had conquered Egypt he appointed a series of governors, *i.e.* “Kashafa” (Al-Ghuzz) to rule his portion of Nubia, and supported their authority with Bosnian troops. These had built fortresses at Aswān, Ibrīm, and on the Island of Sai, and under Hasan Kūshī their power was great, for they drove all the Arabs southwards to Dongola. After Hasan’s death the Fungs wished to add Northern Nubia to their kingdom and they sent an army to occupy it. Ibn Janbalān, the chief of the Ghuzz, collected an army and set out to drive back the invaders to the south. A battle took place at Hannek, and the Fungs were defeated with great slaughter, and retreated rapidly, leaving their path strewn with their dead. It is said that the Bosnians collected the blood of their enemies in a large vessel, over which they built a “Ḳubbah” or domed edifice, which henceforward marked the boundary between the territory of the Fungs and the Bosnians. From this time to 1820 the Ghuzz ruled their country in peace. Remains of

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

several of the Bosnian fortresses are still to be seen in Lower Nubia (Dār Mahass and Dār Sukkot), both on the islands and on the river banks. There are two between Wādī Ḥalfah and Semnah, one on the Island of Jazīrat al-Malik, one on the west bank of the Nile a little further south, and one on the Island of Sai. Each consisted of a central fort surrounded by walls about 24 feet high and 5 feet thick. On each wall was a high tower which was ascended by steps. The sloping stone work from the river to the walls of the forts is in a good state of preservation at the present day. In 1820 Ismā'īl appointed Hasan ibn Sulēmān Kāshif of the Nile Valley from Aswān to Wādī Ḥalfah.

In 1820 Muḥammad 'Alī sent his youngest son Ismā'īl with an army of 5000 Turks and Arabs to conquer Nubia. He advanced without difficulty to Dongola, where he fought and defeated the Mamlūk Beys who had fled there from Egypt. He then marched on to Kharṭūm, Sennaar and Fā-Zō'glī, and established the sovereignty of Egypt. On his return to Shendi he was invited to a banquet by Nimr, the Mekh of Shendi, who, whilst his guests were drinking, set fire to the house, and Ismā'īl and his followers were burnt to death. This took place in 1822, soon after the founding of the city of Kharṭūm which Muḥammad 'Alī intended to be his capital in the Sūdān. When the news of this treacherous act reached Muḥammad Bey, who had gone to take possession of Kordofān for Muḥammad 'Alī, he hastened back to Shendi with a large army, to avenge Ismā'īl's death. He bombarded the town and destroyed the palace and most of the houses, and then he and his troops entered in and massacred every person they found there. Nimr escaped, but his subjects suffered terribly, and a true and full account of the atrocities committed by the Blacks is unprintable. In 1839 Muḥammad 'Alī, then about 70 years of age, visited Kharṭūm and Fā-Zō'glī, and he determined to exploit the Sūdān to the utmost, his chief object being to obtain an unlimited supply of gold and slaves. He interviewed the chiefs of all the tribes, and with great adroitness stirred up strife everywhere. His object was to make the various chiefs attack each other, and when the fights were over he appropriated their lands and possessions and destroyed the remnants of their peoples. He seized the Province of Tāka (Kasala), and the capture of the town was followed by the slaughter



## NUBIA

of hundreds of unarmed men and women and children, and the four hundred Arnauts, *i.e.* Albanian mercenaries, which he had with him committed atrocities which in devilish cunning and cruelty surpassed any that the pagan Blacks from the south had ever committed.

About 1840 Ahmad Pāshā, governor of Kharṭūm, made the Dongola Province, *i.e.* Kash, or Kūsh, and the Berber Province, two of the seven Provinces of the Sūdān; thus Muḥammad 'Alī's Sūdān included all the territories of the ancient kingdoms of Napata and Meroë. During the next 40 years Nubia and the provinces to the south were reduced to a state of ruin and absolute misery by the misrule and oppression of the Egyptians. The immediate result was the rebellion fomented and directed by Muḥammad Ahmad now commonly known as the "Mahdī." This remarkable man was born about 1843 on the Island of Darār, and was a native of the Dongola Province, and therefore a "Kūshite." His father was one 'Abd Allāh, a boat-builder, and his mother was called Zēnab; Muḥammad Ahmad was a posthumous son. In 1881 he declared publicly that he was the Mahdī, whom the Muslims expected to appear A.H. 1500, *i.e.* A.D. 1882. The authorities in Kharṭūm tried to capture him, but he defeated the Government troops on several occasions in 1881 and 1882, and in January 1883 Bāra and Al-'Ubēd fell into his hands. In November he defeated Hicks Pāshā and annihilated his army, and Egypt decided to abandon the Sūdān. In January 1885 the Mahdī's troops captured Kharṭūm, and General Charles Gordon was murdered shortly before sunrise on Monday the 25th. It was not the strategy of the Mahdī nor treachery on the part of Gordon's men which brought about this result, but the operation of Fate. The river had filled the ditch which protected Kharṭūm with mud, and then slowly drained away; over this mud the Mahdī's troops scrambled and entered the town and swarmed into the palace and speared Gordon to death. The Mahdīists slew thousands of people (Slatin says 4000, Ohrwalder 10,000) in the cruellest manner possible, and Gordon's head was cut off and sent across the river to the Mahdī. The Mahdī died on June 22, and the Khalīfah 'Abd Allāh began to mature his plans for the conquest of Egypt. In 1886 Wādī Ḥalfah was made the frontier of Egypt on the south,

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

and on June 4, 1888, the last detachment of British troops was withdrawn from Aswān, and Egypt was left to the protection of the Egyptian Army which had been called into existence by Sir Evelyn Wood, General Grenfell, Col. Kitchener and others. In 1896 the British Government felt that the time had come to reduce the Khalifah's power, and they ordered an advance on Dongola. The expedition was led by the Sirdar, Sir Herbert Kitchener, who on June 7 destroyed the Khalifah's frontier force at the Battle of Ferket (Farkat), and advanced to Marawi, the modern town near the site of the ancient Napata. On September 2, 1898, he bombarded Ummdurmān, and a fierce battle took place; at the close of the day the Dervishes broke and fled, and Kitchener had conquered the Khalifah 'Abd Allāh. The Dervish loss was 10,800 killed and 16,000 wounded: the Anglo-Egyptian loss was 48 killed and 382 wounded. For fine accounts of the Battle of Ummdurmān see *Sudan Campaigns* by "an Officer," p. 191 ff., and Royle, *Egyptian Campaigns*, p. 551. When Kitchener rode into the town it was found that the Khalifah had escaped; over 10,000 prisoners were set free, and a few days later the British destroyed the Mahdī's tomb. In November 1899, General (now Sir) F. R. Wingate pursued the Khalifah to Umm Dabrēkāt, and after a fierce fight killed him and about 1000 of his followers. By the Anglo-Egyptian Agreement of March 1899 the Egyptian Sūdān is bounded on the north by the 22nd parallel of north latitude; on the east by the Red Sea, Eritrea and Abyssinia; on the south and south-west by a line running through the Libyan Desert, by the Sultanate of Wadai, and by the ridge of rising ground forming the watershed between the Congo and Shari on one side, and the Nile on the other; and on the north by the Lado Enclave and east of the Nile, by the 5th parallel of north latitude. That part of Nubia which is north of the 22nd parallel of north latitude is now reckoned to be a part of Egypt. The boundary is for all practical purposes marked by the Island of Faras. Thus Egypt rules the lower part of Nubia which she held effectively from the XIIth to the XXth Dynasty, and the country of Kash (Kūsh), and the Island of Meroë, and the region south of Khartūm, become the Egyptian Sūdān, over which in ancient days the Egyptians had no hold, pass under the rule of the British. For the history of these countries from

## NUBIA

1820 to the present time the reader is referred to Gleichen, *The Anglo-Egyptian Sudan*, 2 vols., London, 1915; Shoucair, *The History and Geography of the Sudan*, 3 vols. (in Arabic), Cairo, 1903; Wingate, *Mahdiism*, London, 1891; Slatin, *Fire and Sword in the Sudan*, London, 1896; Ohrwalder, *Ten Years' Captivity in the Mahdi's Camp*, London, 1892; Royle, *Egyptian Campaigns*, London, 1896; Budge, *The Egyptian Sūdān*, 2 vols., London, 1907.




The tomb of the Mahdi at Ummdurman.




### CHRISTIANITY IN NUBIA

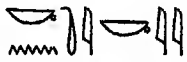
Exactly how and when Christianity was introduced into Nubia is not known. Some have thought that the Ethiopian eunuch whom Philip baptized (Acts viii. 27) returned to "Ethiopia," and converted "Candace, queen of the Ethiopians," and that Christianity entered Nubia from the south in the first half of the 1st century A.D. But no evidence has been adduced in support of this view,

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

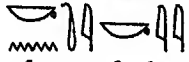
and all the known facts about the series of queens who bore the name of "Candace" show that it is untenable. Four queens called "Candace" are known: 1. The queen of the kingdom of Semiramis, to whom Alexander the Great wrote a letter, and who is said to have reigned over Meroë *Βασίλισσα Κανδάκη Μερῶης* (Pseudo-Callisthenes, III. 18). 2. The one-eyed Candace who captured Philae and Syene and their Roman garrisons, but who was subsequently taken prisoner by Petronius at Pselchis, as Strabo states. 3. The Candace, "queen of the Ethiopians," mentioned in Acts viii. 27, 4, and the queen Candace who, according to Pliny (VI. 35) was reigning at Meroë when Nero's centurions passed through the town on their way to the south to discover the sources of the Nile. An inscription on the wall of a chapel of a pyramid at Meroë mentions most probably a fifth Candace. The name or title is written





within a cartouche thus  K-N-T-A-HEB-I-T.

The last two signs  have nothing to do with the name, except that they form a feminine termination, and so the name or title is K-n-t-a-heb-i. But it was thought by Lepsius and others many years ago that the sign  heb was a mistake for , and if we

insert this in the name we get  K-N-T-A-K-I, which is probably the original form of the Greek *Κανδάκη*. If this be so we have a fifth queen who bore the name or title of Candace. Griffith

thinks (*Karandg*, p. 10) that  KATAKE may be the

Merotic equivalent of  K-N-T-A-K-I, but it may be

noted that the Syriac form of the name Candace is  KÜNDĀKĀ (see Budge, *Life of Alexander*, p. 210, l. 12), and the Ethiopic forms are  KENDAKE (Budge, *Exploits of Alexander*, vol. I, p. 106, l. 19)  HENDAKE in ancient MSS. and  HENDAKE in modern ones. Now, Candace No. 1 may or may not have been historical, but it is probable that she is not. Candace No. 2, whether she reigned at Napata or Meroë, cannot have been the queen whose eunuch was baptized by Philip, for she lived too early. Candace No. 3 was probably reigning when Philip was in Palestine, but there is no evidence that she or her subjects abandoned the worship of Amen-Rā, Isis and Osiris and

## NUBIA

became Christians. Of Candace No. 4 who reigned when Nero's centurions passed through her city we know nothing. Candace No. 5 whose pyramid is at Meroë may have been the queen of Meroe referred to in Acts viii. 27, or the Candace of Pliny. Therefore it seems to me that Christianity cannot have entered Nubia from the south; on the contrary such evidence as we have suggests that it passed into that country from Egypt.

Eusebius (*Hist. Eccles.*, II. 16) and other ancient authorities thought that the new religion not only spread southwards from Egypt, but advanced in that direction rapidly. The persecutions of the Christians in Egypt by the Romans in the 2nd and 3rd centuries prove that the growth of Christianity frightened the Roman Emperors, who ordered their officers in Egypt to spare no pains in stamping out the new religion. Many Christians no doubt in order to save their lives and property apostatized, and many fled the country. But whither could they flee? The most natural place was some part of Nubia which could not be reached easily by the strong hand of Rome, and the Oases in the Western Desert. Wherever they went they took Christianity with them, and the merchant caravans which traded with the Nubians would report the doings and happenings in Egypt. The great persecution of the Christians under Galerius and Maximinus (305-313) filled the hills and deserts with monks, and even the Thebaid contained many cœnobites and anchorites. According to Bar Hebraeus (*Hist. Dynast.*, p. 125) in the time of Constantine the Christianity of the Copts had penetrated all Egypt, Habshah (Abyssinia) and Nūbah. Many of those who fled took refuge in the islands in the Nile, e.g. Arnitti, Sai, Nilwatti, Wassi, Nilwa, Ertemri, Narnarti, etc., and the remains of many Christian buildings, churches, monasteries, etc. are found at comparatively frequent intervals all the way up between Hannek and Marawi, and some of them are believed to be earlier than the 6th century. Many of these have been examined and described by Somers Clarke, *Christian Antiquities in the Nile Valley*, Oxford, 1912. But it is too much to say that Christianity was accepted by the Nubians generally in the 4th century, for Olympiodorus (ed. Bekker, p. 62), who visited the country between 407 and 425, says that Bejas and other tribes of the Blemmyes were pagans, and the famous Edict of Theodosius I (378-395) makes it

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

quite clear that the cult of Isis and Osiris flourished in Nubia at that time. And this condition of things remained unchanged thirty years later for Marinus of Flavia Neapolis tells us (ed. Boissonade, Leipzig, 1814, p. 109) in his *Life of Proclus*, that in his day Isis was worshipped at Philae.

The conversion of the Nubians to Christianity took place in the second half of the 6th century, most probably near the end of it, and the person who seems primarily to have brought it about was Silkō, the chief of the Nobadae and of all the Ethiopians. His famous inscription, which is cut in Greek on a wall in the temple of Talmis, *i.e.* Kalābshah (see Gau, *Antiquités de la Nubie*, pl. 1. No. 1; and Dittenberger, *Graeci Inscriptiones Selectae*, tom. 1. p. 303), is as follows:

### TRANSLATION.

- 1 I am Silkō, Chieftain of the Nobadae and of all the
- 2 Ethiopians, I came to Talmis (Kalābshah) and to Taphis.  
Once, twice,
- 3 I fought with the Blemmyes, and GOD gave me the
- 4 victory over the three. I conquered them once and for all,  
and made
- 5 myself master of their cities, and established myself therein,  
together with
- 6 my troops for the first time I conquered them,
- 7 and they made supplication to me, and I made peace with  
them,
- 8 and they swore oaths to me by the images of their gods  
[Isis and Osiris], and I trusted
- 9 in their oaths that they were honourable men. Then I  
returned
- 10 into the upper part of my country. When I had become  
Chieftain
- 11 I did not follow behind other kings,
- 12 but [was] in the very front of them (*i.e.* he was greater  
than any king known to him who had preceded him in  
Nubia).
- 13 And as for those who strive with me for the mastery, I do  
not permit them to live

## NUBIA

- 14 in their own country unless they beg forgiveness from me.  
 15 For in the Lower Country I am a lion, and in the Upper  
     Country I am an oryx (?).  
 16 I fought with the Blemmyes from Primis to Talmis  
 17 once. And of the other Nobadae in the south I ravaged  
 18 their lands, since they contended with me  
 19 As for the chiefs of the other nations who strive with me  
     for the mastery,  
 20 I do not permit them to sit in the shade, but in the sun  
 21 outside, and they cannot take a drink of water in their own  
     houses. As for those  
 22 who offer resistance to me I carry off their wives and  
     children.

TEXT, Dittenberger, *op. cit.*, vol. I. p. 303.

- 1 Ἐγὼ Σιλκῶ, Βασιλίσκος Νουβάδων καὶ ὄλον τῶν  
 2 Αἰθιοπῶν, ἦλθον εἰς Τάλμιν καὶ Τάφιν. ἄπαξ δύο ἐπο-  
 3 λέμησα μετὰ τῶν Βλεμύων, καὶ ὁ θεὸς ἔδωκέν μοι τὸ  
 4 νίκημα. μετὰ τῶν τριῶν ἄπαξ ἐνίκησα πάλιν καὶ ἐκρά-  
 5 τησα τὰς πόλεις αὐτῶν. ἐκαθέσθην μετὰ τῶν  
 6 ὄχλων μου τὸ μὲν πρῶτον ἄπαξ. ἐνίκησα αὐτῶν  
 7 καὶ αὐτοὶ ἤξιωσάν με. ἐποίησα εἰρήνην μετ' αὐτῶν  
 8 καὶ ἄμοσάν μοι τὰ εἶδωλα αὐτῶν καὶ ἐπίστευσα τὸν  
 9 ὄρκον αὐτῶν, ὡς καλοὶ εἰσιν ἄνθρωποι. ἀναχωρήθην  
 10 εἰς τὰ ἄνω μέρη μου. ὅτε ἐγεγονέμην βασιλίσκος,  
 11 οὐκ ἀπῆλθον ὄλωσ ὀπίσω τῶν ἄλλων βασιλέων,  
 12 ἀλλὰ ἀκμὴν ἐμπροσθεν αὐτῶν.  
 13 οἱ γὰρ φιλονικοῦσιν μετ' ἐμοῦ, οὐκ ἀφῶ αὐτοὺς καθεζόμε-  
 14 νοι εἰς χώραν αὐτῶν, εἰ μὴ κατηξίωσάν με καὶ παρακαλοῦσιν.  
 15 ἐγὼ γὰρ εἰς κάτω μέρη λέων εἰμί, καὶ εἰς ἄνω μέρη ἄρξ εἰμι.  
 16 ἐπολέμησα μετὰ τῶν Βλεμύων ἀπὸ Πρίμ[εως] ἕως Τέλ[μ]εως  
 17 ἐν ἄπαξ, καὶ οἱ ἄλλοι Νουβάδων ἀνωτέρω ἐπόρησα τὰς  
 18 χώρας αὐτῶν, ἐπειδὴ ἐφιλονικήσουσιν μετ' ἐμοῦ.  
 19 οἱ δεσπότη[αι] τῶν ἄλλων ἐθνῶν, οἱ φιλονεικοῦσιν μετ' ἐμοῦ,  
 20 οὐκ ἀφῶ αὐτοὺς καθεσθῆναι εἰς τὴν σκιάν, εἰ μὴ ὑπὸ ἡλίου  
 21 ἔξω, καὶ οὐκ ἔπωκαν νηρὸν ἔσω εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν αὐτῶν. οἱ γὰρ  
 22 ἀντίδικοι μου, ἀρπάξω τῶν γυναικῶν καὶ τὰ παιδιά αὐτῶν.

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

This inscription shows that Silkō defeated the Blemmyes on several occasions, and that after five fights he occupied Talmis (Kalābshah) and Taphis (Tafa), which none of his predecessors had done. And that he took their country as far south as Primis (Ibrīm). These victories he acknowledges were given to him by GOD, it would seem the GOD of the Christians. The gods of the Blemmyes he calls τὰ εἰδωλα, referring presumably to Isis, Osiris and Priapus, who were still being worshipped at Philae. The Blemmyes were in the habit of sacrificing men to the sun, and were addicted to the cult of Priapus. These kings were, apparently, abominations to Silkō, and as he was *de facto* master of the country and conquerer of the Blemmyes, and offered no opposition to Justinian's command to suppress the cult of Isis and Osiris at Philae, Narses was enabled to carry out the emperor's wish and transport the statues of these deities to Constantinople. The feeling of the country in general must have been in favour of the high-handed proceeding of Narses, or he could not have carried it out. Silkō's victory over the Blemmyes and the removal of the statues took place about the same time, and it seems that it was Silkō's successes that brought about the downfall of the worship of the gods of Philae. Some think that Silkō had come to an understanding with Justinian and others with the Empress Theodora.

According to Bar Hebraeus (*Hist. Eccles.*, ed. Abbeloos and Lamy, tom. 1. col. 220 ff.) Justinian sent a bishop and other envoys to Nubia, with gifts for the king, and Theodora sent Julian, a Jacobite priest, with letters to the duke of the Thebaïd, and instructed him to arrange matters in such a way that her envoy Julian should arrive in Nubia and use his influence on the king before the bishop sent by Justinian could reach that country. This the duke managed to do, with the result that Julian arrived in Nubia before the bishop and baptized the king and his nobles, and taught him the Jacobite faith. When the bishop reached Nubia the king and his people accepted the gifts which he brought, but refused to embrace his doctrines, and be baptized a second time. Bar Hebraeus adds, "Thus were all the people of the Kūshites converted to the orthodox faith, and they became subjects of the throne of Alexandria. And Julian remained there for a period of

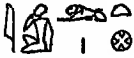


## NUBIA

two years. From the third to the tenth hour he stood and baptized in caves full of water, naked and with a girdle about him, the upper part of his body only being out of the water." Julian's work was carried on by Longinus of Constantinople. He was appointed by the Patriarch Theodosius, and went to Nubia with two assistants and stayed there for six years. He built a church and established clergy, and taught the Christian faith according to the Jacobites to the people. Under Silkō's successor, who was called Eirpanome, the temples of Tāfah, Kalābshah, Dakkah, Wādī Sabū'a, 'Amādah and Abu Simbel, were turned into Christian churches. Theodore, bishop of Philae, turned the pronaos of the temple of Philae into a church, and he covered its walls with plaster to hide the figures of the Egyptian gods, and built a shrine in it dedicated to St Stephen. All this happened before the close of the 6th century.

The place chosen for the capital of the Christian kingdom of Nubia was Dongola, which is now called "Old Dongola" as opposed to New Dongola, *i.e.* Al-Urdī; it is 351 miles from Wādī Ḥalfah and is on the east bank of the Nile. Soon after 640 the Arabs captured the town and laid the people under the tribute known as the "Bākṭ." In 737 the Christian Nubians under their king Cyriacus marched into Egypt with 100,000 horsemen and 100,000 camels to protect their Patriarch Khail; they laid waste the country between Aswān and Cairo, and at the request of the Patriarch returned to their own country. In 1002 Raphael, king of Nubia, built many churches and monasteries, and in the 12th century Dongola was a large city, with many churches, and domed houses built of red brick, and wide streets. Mr James Currie found the remains of a monastery in the Oasis of Salimah, 50 miles west of the Nile, and Mr Crowfoot found remains of churches at Firgi, Khalēwah, Amentogo, 'Arab Hag between Khandak and Old Dongola (see Budge, *Egyptian Sūdān*, vol. II. p. 300 f.). Abu Sālih (ed. Evetts) says that the Nubian Liturgy and prayers were in Greek, and that the Patriarchs of Alexandria consecrated their bishops, and Mr A. J. Butler thinks that Christianity was introduced into Nubia before the Egyptian Liturgy was translated into Coptic. [On texts in the Nubian language relating to Saint Mēna and the Canons of Nicaea, see Budge, *Nubian Texts*, London, 1909, and Griffith, *Nubian Texts of the Christian Period*, Berlin, 1913.] In late Egyptian times, as we

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

have seen, Nubia contained two kingdoms; the capital of the one was Napata, and the capital of the other was Meroc. In the 12th century there were also two kingdoms in Nubia; the capital of the one (Mukurra) was Dongola, which had taken the place of Napata, and the capital of the other ('Alwa, or 'Aliya, the  of the hieroglyphic texts) was Sōbah. Abu Sālih (ed. Evetts, p. 236) says there were four hundred churches in the kingdom of 'Alwa, as well as monasteries built on the river banks and on the plain. John of Syria told father Alvarez in the 16th century that there were still one hundred and fifty churches which contained crucifixes, and pictures of the Virgin Mary painted on the walls. Each church stood within a fortified building, as in Northern Nubia. On the Blue Nile, about 12 miles from Khartūm, are remains which are believed to be those of the Christian city of Sōbah. Here there stood an old Merottic temple, which, judging by the Coptic cross which is cut on portions of some of its pillars, was turned into a Christian temple. The temple was dedicated to Amen, and the stone ram found there and now in Khartūm was one of the chief objects of the cult.

The kingdoms of Mukurra and 'Alwa flourished from about 1100 to about 1250, when the kings of these countries began to quarrel. The country round about Dongola became filled with Muslims in the latter half of the 13th century, and in 1317 a mosque was dedicated to the glory of God in the town itself. From the time of the Patriarch Cyril (1235) the Nubian Church was left to manage its own affairs, with the result that serious dissensions between the clergy and the civil powers broke out, and the Muslims promptly took advantage of them. The persecution of the Christians in Egypt by the Muslims was extended into Nubia; many of the Nubians followed the example of their co-religionists in Egypt and apostatized, and married Arab women, many were killed, the churches were burnt and mosques erected in their places, and the Nubian Church ceased to exist before the end of the 14th century. Attacked by the Arabs on the north, and by the Blacks of Dār Fūr and Kordofān on the south, the Nubian peoples became tributaries both of the Bejas and the Blacks. Hasan the Geographer (ed. Robert Brown, London, 1896, vol. III. p. 836) says that Nubia

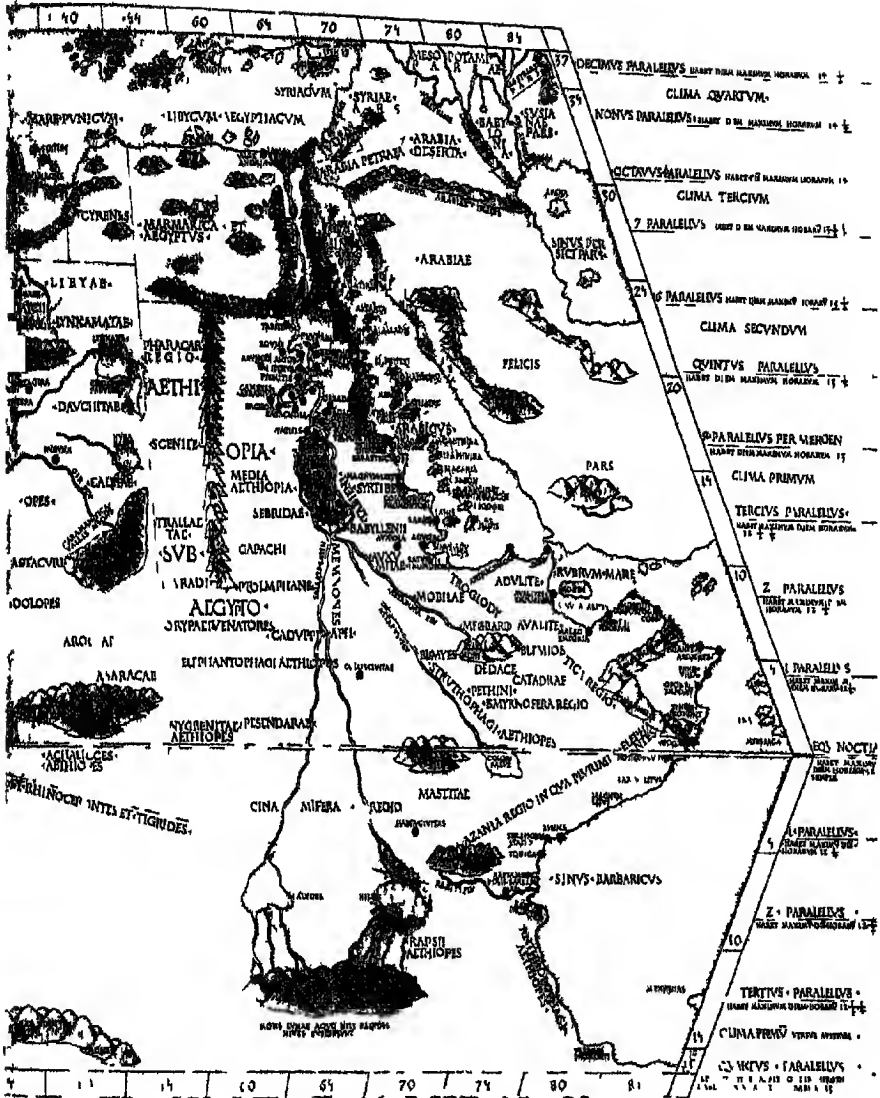
## NUBIA

was divided into fifteen kingdoms, whose chiefs were subject to four overlords. He further says that the Nubians were governed by a woman, whom they called "GANA," and that having lost the light of the Gospel they have embraced a corrupt form of Judaism and Islām, and that their spiritual condition is "most wretched and miserable."

## ABYSSINIA

THE descriptions of Ethiopia given by Homer, Herodotus, Diodorus, Strabo and Pliny make it quite clear that they indicated by this name the vast tracts of country in Asia and Africa that were inhabited by dark-skinned and black-faced peoples. These they divided into two groups, Eastern Ethiopians and Western Ethiopians; the former lived in Arabia, Syria, Mesopotamia and India, and the latter in the regions west of the Red Sea, Egypt, and the Sūdān. The object of this book is not to deal with all the countries and peoples of "Ethiopia," but only with two of its countries and their peoples, viz. Kūsh and the Kūshites, *i.e.* Nubia and the Nubians, and Abyssinia and the Abyssinians. In the preceding section it has been shown that the Semites of Western Asia knew the position of Kūsh to the south of Egypt, but whether they considered it to be a part of Ethiopia is uncertain. The translators of the Bible into Greek identified Kūsh with Ethiopia (*e.g.* in Psalm lxvii. 23, where the Hebrew **כּוּשׁ** is rendered by *Aiθιοπία*), and they, like the classical writers mentioned above, apparently knew nothing of Abyssina, or its position, or its people. The name of Ethiopia was definitely given to Abyssinia by those who translated the Bible from Greek into "Ethiopic," *i.e.* Gē'ēz, and the Hebrew word Kūsh is translated by 'Ītēyōpēyā **ኢትዮጵያ** or Ethiopia. And to this day the Abyssinians call their country Ethiopia, and this name for it appears in the Amharic version of the Scriptures. The old Gē'ēz version was begun at Aksūm, probably soon after the introduction of Christianity into the country. But the region in which Aksūm was situated must have had a native name by which it was known to the nations around, and this name was Habesh, from which the name Abyssinia is derived. The Aksūmites preferred to call their country Ethiopia, and not Habesh, for to them Ethiopia was Kūsh, and the Kūshites had, after their conquest of the Negro tribes, made themselves masters of the greater part of north-east Africa, with perhaps the exception of Egypt. The name of Habesh is derived from that of the Semitic tribe called Ḥabashat, **حَبَشَة**,


TABVLA.



MAP OF EGYPT AND ETHIOPIA ACCORDING TO PTOLEMY THE GEOGRAPHER, SHOWING THE TWO GREAT CENTRAL AFRICAN LAKES, THE MARSHES OF THE NILE AND THE MOUNTAINS OF THE MO



## ABYSSINIA

which was one of the most important of the Semitic tribes that crossed the Red Sea from South Arabia, and settled in Africa. Rossini has shown that the original home of the Ḥabashat was Yaman in western South Arabia near the coast of the Red Sea ("Sugli Ḥabashat" in the *Rendiconti della R. A. dei Lincei*, Rome, 1906), and this view is accepted by Enno Littmann (*Deutsche Aksum-Expedition*, Berlin, 1913, Bd. I. p. 41). But the Ḥabashat were foreigners, and appear to have been regarded with no great favour by the native population, though they brought with them a civilization which was superior to their own. The name **ህህሳ** Habashā is given in modern Amharic dictionaries, and Guidi says it takes the place of the "denominazione nazionale 'Īṭyōp̣yā," and thinks that it is a very old equivalent for "Abyssinians" (see *Nuova Antologia*, 16 Giugno, 1896), and d'Abbadie (*Dictionnaire*, Paris, 1881, col. 9) says that this name of Ethiopia is only used by a small number of natives who can speak a little Arabic, but who do not know that it is "injurieux." It is possible that Habesh represents a very old name of Abyssinia, and some Italian authorities (e.g. Dr L. de Castro, *Nella Terra dei Negus*, Milan, 1915, vol. I. p. 79) think it may mean "bastards," whilst others are inclined to connect it with the Amharic **ዋሻ** *wāshā* a "cave" or "cavern." There were, as there still are, dwellers in caves in Abyssinia, but it is difficult to see how Habesh can be derived from *wāshā*. Strabo and others speak of Troglodytes or men who take refuge in caves, but these cannot have been the cave-men of Abyssinia, for Strabo had no knowledge of the existence of Abyssinia. They are far more likely to have been the hill folk to which the Egyptians gave the name of Antiu  and against whom they fought frequently. There is no doubt, for all the authorities agree on this point, that if a native be called "Ḥabashiyy" **ህህሳዊ** he feels insulted, and that it is regarded by the natives generally as an abusive epithet, and a word indicative of the contempt of the speaker for the physical or mental defects of the man whom he addresses. On the other hand the word may only have the general meaning of "common folk," like the Assyrian *amelu khu-ub-shi*, with which, I am informed by Mr Sidney Smith, it has been compared. One thing is certain, namely, that as early

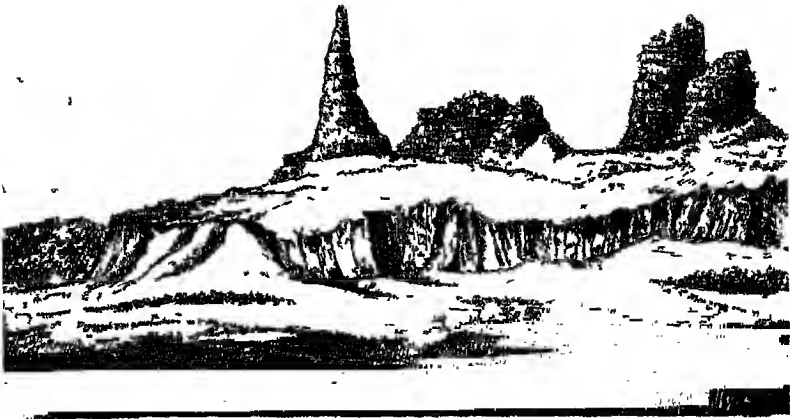
## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

as the 4th century of our era Habashat was recognized as a name of Ethiopia

The extent of Ethiopia-Abyssinia in ancient days is unknown, but according to native tradition it included all the country lying between the Nile and the Red Sea, and from Northern Nubia to the Equator or beyond. Its boundaries on the north and south varied from time to time, especially in the south, and in the Middle Ages disputes over the boundaries, which were frequently followed by wars, were of frequent occurrence. The authority of the Abyssinians over the western coast of the Red Sea must always have been of a shadowy character. The country of Abyssinia is bounded on the north and north-west by Nubia and the Egyptian Sūdān; on the north and north-east by the Italian Eritrea, French Somaliland and English Somaliland; and on the south by British East Africa. By a treaty made at Addis Ababa on 15 May, 1902, the frontier between the Sūdān and Abyssinia is marked by a line drawn from Khor Um Haga (I give the names as spelt by Gleichen) to Galabat, to the Blue Nile, Baro, Pibor, and Akobo rivers, to Helile, thence to the intersection of the 6° north latitude with the 35° longitude east of Greenwich. Menyelek II engaged himself not to construct or allow to be constructed any work across the Blue Nile, Lake Tsānā, or the Sobat river which would arrest the flow of their waters into the Nile, except in agreement with H. B. M.'s Govt and the Govt. of the Sūdān. He also agreed to the formation of a commercial station in the neighbourhood of Itang on the Baro river, and granted to the British Govt. the right to construct a railway through Abyssinian territory to connect the Sūdān with Uganda. The western frontier of Abyssinia continues from the 6° north latitude, where it intersects the 35° longitude east of Greenwich, towards the south and follows the right bank of the Orno river to Lake Rudolph, and the eastern shore of this lake as far as the 3° north latitude, where the limit of Abyssinia comes to an end. On the east this portion of Abyssinia is bounded by the Italian settlement of Benadir. Thus Abyssinia has lost its sea-coast

The area of Abyssinia, like its frontiers, has varied considerably from time to time. According to some authorities the country extended from the 7°–17° north latitude in 1868, and from the 33° to the 40° east longitude. But Menyelek II added much territory to





ABYSSINIAN MOUNTAINS WITH 'AMIAS NEAR ADUA THE TOWNS AND VILLAGES ON THESE HIGH INACCESSIBLE MOUNTAINS ARE OFTEN TURNED INTO FORTRASSES, FROM WHICH THE INHABITANTS ARE ABLE TO DEFEAT THE GOVERNMENT WITH IMPUNITY

FROM THE DRAWING BY A. RAFFRAY ('ABYSSINIE', PARIS, 1880)



VIEW OF THE HAILOPPID MOUNTAINS OF SAKA AND AMBAS IN THE COUNTRY OF THE 'AGAW AND OF A PORTION OF THE TALLARÉ VALLEY

FROM THE DRAWING BY A. RAFFRAY ('ABYSSINIE', PARIS, 1880)



## ABYSSINIA

his kingdom, and at the present time Abyssinia, as a political kingdom delimited by treaties made between its king and England, France and Italy, extends from the  $3^{\circ}$  to the  $15^{\circ}$  (or  $16^{\circ}$ ) north latitude, and from the  $35^{\circ}$  to the  $42^{\circ}$  east longitude. The country is somewhat triangular in shape, the narrowest part, which is in the north, being about 300 miles from east to west, and the broadest part, which is in the south, being between 900 and 950 miles from east to west. The area of this triangle was given in 1868 as about 500,000 square kilometres, but now as a result of the additions to the territory of the kingdom it may be said to be about 550,000 square kilometres. Naturally no exact figures can be given, for the country has never been surveyed as a whole.

Divisions of Abyssinia. Travellers and others state that the country is divided into Kingdoms and Provinces. De la Croix enumerates 10 Kingdoms and 10 Provinces; the former are Tigré, Dambia, Begamder, Gojam, Amhara, Enarya, Shoa, Angot, Damot-Dari and Damot-Adari: the latter are Mangasha, Salam, Wagara, Abba-Galc, Walqait, Sagad, Samien, Sloa, Walaga, and Deba. Ludolf mentions 9 Kingdoms and 5 Provinces, and Bruce found there were 4 Kingdoms, viz. Tigré, Amhara, Shoa and Gojam, and 19 Provinces. In Tigré were Enderta, Antalen, Siray, Bahr-Negus and Tigré (Tigray), and in Amhara and other parts of the country were Samien, Waldabba, Begamder, Walaku, Dambia, Damot, Agaumder, Kuara, Enarya, Rās al-Fil, Thyelga, Sakahala, Guto and Lasta. Salt mentions 3 Kingdoms only, Tigré, Amhara and Shoa. Kingdoms were governed by hereditary feudal chiefs, the king being their overlord, and the Provinces were the possessions or estates of the king. At the present time the Kingdoms are divided into provinces and districts, some of which are governed by hereditary tribal chiefs, each of which has the title "Rās," and some by officials of various grades and titles. The three kingdoms to-day are Tigray, Amhara and Shoa. In ancient times Tigray in northern Abyssinia was the most important of the three kingdoms, for in it was situated the town of Aksūm (identified by some with the *Ἰθυσίς* of Strabo), which was not only the religious centre of the country, but the capital of the Kingdom. Its seaport was Adulis, the modern Zullah, and it was a rich and prosperous town; in later times it lost its importance, and Adūa became the capital. The



## ABYSSINIA

Tabor, the residence of King John, and Samara, the residence of King Theodore), Gondar, Deba, Fakuera, Ghimcluis, Kuara, Waag, Walqait, Waldebba, Wugara, Samien. The district of Gojam contains six Provinces ; its capital is Monkorer.

The old capitals of Shoa were Ankober, Angolala, Litchay-Aureillo and Entoto ; the present capital is Addis Ababa, which is also the capital of Abyssinia. Shoa is divided into three parts, Upper Shoa, Lower Shoa and Ogadeyn, in Somaliland. The three Kingdoms, Tigray, Amhara and Shoa, were ruled directly by Menyelek II, and the other provinces and districts which lie chiefly to the south-west of Abyssinia proper were governed by local chiefs and governors of whom he was the overlord. Among such provinces may be mentioned those of the Walagi, the countries of the Gallas, Oromos, Sidamos, the countries of the Agaws, Enarya, Ghera, Kumbata, and Kaffa (ancient capital Bonga, modern capital Andratchi). The chiefs of the Kaffa claim to be descended from Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, and the dominant class have a religion which is a mixture of monophysitism and paganism. The Kafikos represent the ancient dwellers in the land, and the Wattas are negroes.

One of the oldest towns in Abyssinia is Aksüm, and it was for many centuries regarded as the capital of the country ; in MSS. it is often called the "Sion of Ethiopia" and the "New Sion" (Addis Sion), and the Ark of the Covenant which Menyelek I brought from Jerusalem found its resting-place there. Many other towns have been called the capital of Ethiopia, and among such may be mentioned Nūsh, Arka, Tegulet, Sokota, Barra, Gondar, Dabra Tabor, Adua, Antalou and Entoto. Towns which have special interest historically are Makdalā, which was captured by the British in 1867 ; Kueskuam, an important ecclesiastical centre ; Tekangar and Kuarata, on Lake Šānā ; Amba Maryam, Ismala, Yedjibay and Ifag ; Madhera Maryam, famous for its churches and as a place of pilgrimage and as a market ; Asmara, Gundet, Tchelkin, Sanafay, Fitchay, a central market, and Moger ; Dabra Abraham, Dabra Maryam and Dabra Wark ; Kobo, Rogay, Flabu, Aringo, Martola Maryam, Falenagher, Zuay. The newest capital of the kingdom is Addis Ababa, which was founded by Queen Taitu.

The configuration of Abyssinia is very remarkable. To the

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

north of it are the flat deserts of Southern Nubia, on the west are the lowlands of the Nile basin and the country of the Atbara, on the south are the lands of the Omo and Sofal rivers, and on the east and south-east is the western wall of the Eritrean rift-valley. Thus the geographical Abyssinia is smaller than the political Abyssinia, and it may be described as a high rugged triangular plateau which slopes away on the north-west towards the Valley of the Nile, on the south-west towards the region of the great rivers, and on the east towards the sea. The learned Sapeto divides it into three great terraces which lie in the direction north-east to south-west; these terraces represent Tigray, Amhara and Gallal-land, and correspond philologically with the three languages Gě'ez (Ethiopic), Amariŋna (Amharic) and Galla. The first terrace includes Tigray from the 15° to the 12° north latitude, and extends from Cusai and Hamasen to Lasta, which together with the River Takaze, the Astaboras of Strabo, formed the boundary of the great Aksūmite kingdom on the south. The second terrace extends from the 12°-9° north latitude, and the third from the 10° north latitude to the Valley of the Nile. Further north the first terrace consists of rocky strata, and the plateau is about 8000 feet above the sea, and above this rise up rugged, water-riven mountains which are sometimes nearly another 8000 feet higher. Access to the plateau is very difficult because of the precipitous character of the rocks, and the chasms in them, the sides of which are often perpendicular and often many hundreds of feet deep. Some of the stone hills have the appearance of gigantic flat-topped pillars, but generally the rocks look as if they had been twisted and wrenched asunder by Titanic hands. The highest mountains are in the ranges of Agamay and Semēn, and the peaks of Dajan and Jared are more than 15,000 feet in height, and are covered with snow for the greater part of the year. The peak of Ammaveret to the north of Ankobar is said to be nearly 17,000 feet high, but such estimates are more or less conjectural. The parallel 10° N.L. may be said to mark the division between Northern and Southern Abyssinia as far as the height of the plateau is concerned, for south of this parallel the mountains and hills are lower than those to the north of it.

The geographical position of Abyssinia has had a very great



A NATIVE OF THE EASTERN DESERT DRAWING WATER  
FROM A WELL





## ABYSSINIA

effect upon the history and character of the Abyssinian Ethiopians. In ancient days this rocky plateau was practically inaccessible to the peoples around it, especially to any who wished to ascend to it with hostile intent. With the help and favour of those who lived on it merchants could and did travel up to it and transact business, but the Abyssinians were always able to destroy such enemies as wished to attack them whilst they were trying to make their way through difficult passes, and endeavouring to scale the rocky heights. The whole of geographical Abyssinia was a huge rock-fortress, the walls of which were the mountain ranges, with their almost perpendicular sides, the passages through which in the narrow chasms and khors were known only to the natives. They could pour down in their thousands on to the coast-lands of the Red Sea or the lowlands of the Nile Valley, and having raided and plundered them could return to their heights at pleasure, where none could follow them. No ancient nation ever conquered the Abyssinians, in fact no ancient writer knew anything about the plateau and those who dwelt on it. The Ethiopians described by Herodotus, Strabo and other classical writers, were not the dwellers on the plateau, but the peoples who lived on the flat coast-lands of the Red Sea, and in the deserts to the west of the Nile, and the riverain lands to the south. The Abyssinians for centuries boasted that they were an unconquered people, and their self-satisfying belief in their invincibility was not disturbed until the British stormed and took Makdalā in 1867. Then for the first time in history they realized that a power stronger than their own existed, and they did not regain their complacency until Fate played into their hands and they were able to massacre the Italians at Adua. The advantage of the high rocky plateau to the Abyssinians was that it gave them immunity from invasion; its disadvantage was that it cut them off from the rest of the world.

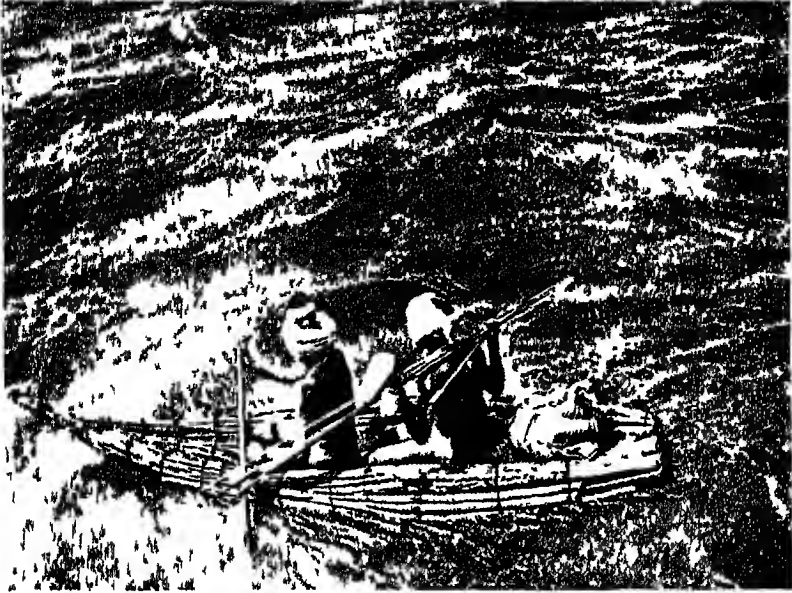
The great rivers of Abyssinia flow from the east in a westerly or north-westerly direction, and so enter the Valley of the Nile. The Mareb which rises in Seray, and forms a part of the boundary between Abyssinia and Eritrea, bends to the south, then turns to the west, and as the Gash river flows out by Tāka (Kasala), and soon afterwards loses itself in the sands of the desert. The River Takaze is fed by several small streams as it flows through Begamder,

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

and near Lake Šānā it turns to the north, and after a large sweep flows to the west, where it is called the Setit, and reaches Tomat, where it is called the Atbarā, and at length it enters the Nile about 790 miles from the place where it rises. Its waters are heavily charged with volcanic detritus, and they carry down to Egypt the rich fertilizing mud and spread it over the whole country. The Atbarā is called by Strabo the Astaboras. The Abāi, or Abāwī, which is commonly known as the Blue Nile, because of the clearness of its waters, rises in the mountains of Sakala, and enters Lake Šānā after a course of 150 miles. It flows out of the southern end of Lake Šānā, and with the Bashillo, which rises in the north-east, it continues its course and, making a very large sweep, it turns to the west and joins the Nile at Khartūm. Its total length is about 1100 miles. Its waters are heavily charged with alluvium, which in the course of centuries has formed the land of Egypt. Smaller rivers, some of which empty themselves into the Abāi, are the Jamma, Muger, Yabus, Bolassa, Rahad and Dinder. Further south are the Gelo, and the Baro and Piboi which together form the Sobat. The Auash or Hawash is fed by the Akaki and Kassām and other streams. It rises in the highlands of Shoa to the west of Addis Ababa, turns from north to south and then to the east, and passing through a passage which it has cut for itself in the eastern rock wall of the plateau, enters the lowlands of Danakil. Here it receives one tributary, and flows in a fairly broad stream towards the Red Sea coast; after a long winding course of some hundreds of miles it enters Lake Aussa near Tajura Bay, and disappears. The River Omo rises in the highlands of Shoa and is about 400 miles long; it has many tributaries and flows into Lake Rudolph.

Among the lakes of Abyssinia may be mentioned: Šānā is 5785 feet above sea-level, its perimeter is about 163 miles, and it has an area of 3000 square kilometres, and in many parts of it is said to be about 300 feet deep, Lake Zuay which at its southern end joins a smaller lake, Lake Margherita, Lake Stephanie and Lake Rudolph. Scattered about the south-western parts of Abyssinia are many small lakes to which the natives have given names; these are filled with fish of a large size, and in several herds of hippopotami congregate.

The configuration of Abyssinia, in the geographical sense, may



THE REED RAFT USED BY THE ABYSSINIANS ON LAKE SANA AND BY THE  
PEOPLES WHO LIVE ON THE BANKS OF THE WHITE Nile



## ABYSSINIA

'be thus described: the country consists of a block of Archaean gneiss and schists, which has been intensely eroded by subaerial agencies; it has been capped by sheets of lava, and is flanked by Jurassic limestone; in places huge piles of volcanic débris form mountains reaching the height of from 15,000 to 16,000 feet in Semēn (Mill, *International Geog.*, London, 1911, p. 934). Another authority describes the country as a land of lakes, mountains and mountain torrents, and says that it is a "pear-shaped mountain clump," the main mass of which has been cut into island-like sections, which are separated by gorges and ravines, some of which are 4000 feet deep. The isolated mountains have naked perpendicular sides, and look like domes, or pyramids, or pillars, or obelisks. The highest mountain is Rās Dashan (15,160 feet, a little higher than Mont Blanc). The snow-line is at 13,000 feet (Meiklejohn, *New Geog.*, London, 1913, p. 357).

**Population.** It seems to be impossible to say what the population of Abyssinia really is, and the views of travellers and officials on the subject are conflicting and are often contradictory. No census of the whole country has ever been taken, and every estimate about the number of people in the country must, for some time yet, contain an element of guess-work. Some writers say that the population is about 2,500,000, and others 3,000,000. On the other hand Dr L. de Castro (*op. cit.*, p. 84) thinks it is 8,000,000, while Morié, basing his statement on an estimate recently made (1903) by M. Ilg, the Prime Minister of Menyelek II, says that the total population of the Abyssinian Empire, including the countries recently annexed, viz. Ausa, Gallaland, Harar, and the Upper Nile, is 10,000,000 of inhabitants who live on an area of about 500,000 square kilometres. But all the known facts suggest that the actual population of Abyssinia to-day is under 4,000,000.

**The Abyssinian People.** Of the occupants of their country in prehistoric times the Abyssinians know nothing; they claim that they are the descendants of Ham, the son of Noah, that Ham begot Kūsh, and Kūsh begot Ethiops, after whom their country is named. But the Kūshites can hardly have been the earliest inhabitants, and it is very probable that the whole of the north-east quarter of Africa was peopled with Negroes, whose original home may have been situated in the western part of it. At a very early period there

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

seem to have been Semites in the country, traces of whose language are found in the language of the Egyptian hieroglyphic inscriptions. At a period almost as early the Kūshites, a branch of the great Hamitic family, drove back the Negroes and occupied the whole of Ethiopian Abyssinia. Several, certainly, but probably many, centuries before Christ Semites from Yaman in South Arabia left their lands on the shores of the Red Sea and crossed over into Africa. Among these people the tribe called Ḥabashat was the most important, and as already said, the name Abyssinia is derived from Habesh, a form of Ḥabashat. With the Ḥabashat Semites, or perhaps following them, several other tribes migrated from Arabia to Africa; these were known as the "Ag'āziyān," *i.e.* the "free," and the Ethiopic language is called "Gē'ēz" after them. The Ḥabashat when they entered Africa found that the people they intended to settle among, and probably to conquer, were to all intents and purposes savages and barbarians, who knew nothing about working in metals, who lived in huts, and whose agricultural methods were of the most primitive description. In fact the Ḥabashat were the first who introduced civilization into Abyssinia (Habesh). They built houses and temples of stone, they introduced a system of agriculture and taught the natives to terrace the hill sides, and they built reservoirs in which to impound the mountain torrents which had hitherto been allowed to dissipate themselves among the sands of the desert. They brought with them their Sabaean language, which was Semitic, and by means of it and their civilization they left an indellible mark upon the civilization of Aksūm. They made affinity with the natives, probably both by marriage and concubinage, but it is clear that they did not succeed in changing completely the physical and racial characteristics of the indigenous Abyssinian, who remains to-day what he ever was.

In all periods of their history the Abyssinians have "mixed" more or less freely with Semites and peoples of Negro or Negroid origin, but their country produces a type of man and woman, *e.g.* in Shoa, whose form and physical characteristics approach perfection, and the type is not altered provided that the admixture of Semitic or Negro blood is not too great. The body is tall and well formed, the features are handsome, straight and regular, the eyes are bold and fearless, the nose good, the mouth sensitive, the hair dark brown

## ABYSSINIA

and curly, or long and straight and almost blue-black in colour. In the north (Tigray) the complexion is light, and sometimes almost fair; in Shoa it is light brown, and in Gallaland it is a very dark reddish brown, and sometimes quite black. The young Abyssinian women have in all periods of history been famed for their beauty, and the Muslims admire them greatly, and have often paid large sums for them. Their great velvety eyes are said to be one of their principal beauties. The broad-shouldered steatopygous women, who are withal well shaped, similar to those represented on the walls of the temple at Wād Ba Nagaa, are greatly in favour, especially in southern Abyssinia. At the present time there are in Abyssinia small colonies of Jews, Armenians, and Indians, whose number is said to increase steadily year by year, and those who have lived in the country for many years tend to become like Abyssinians in appearance, the skin darkening and the eyes changing colour. The Abyssinian is by tradition and instinct a lover of fighting and war, especially the natives of southern Shoa and Gallaland; from the latter country come the greater number of the recruits for the army.

The Gallas say that the name Galla means "immigrant," and they prefer to call themselves "Orma," or "Oroma," *i.e.* "the strong men." They are large and powerfully built, but their features are savage looking, and when they shake their long hair which they wear hanging over their shoulders like a mane, their appearance is animal-like and terrifying. In intelligence they are superior to all the other peoples in East Africa. The Abyssinians of Tigray and Amhara are very intelligent, and their shrewdness is often mingled with cunning. To the European they seem to be a lazy folk, and it is certain that the majority of them would rather walk about carrying a spear and shield or some more modern weapons, than devote themselves to work. They do not regard manual labour with favour. In business they are quick to apply the methods in use among European merchants and dealers, and self-interest is a prominent feature of their character. Many of them have a keen sense of humour. They are intensely religious, as we shall show later on, but their belief in magic is as great now as it was in their pagan days. Some paragraphs on their amulets and magical appliances will be found in another section of this book.

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

**Trees and Vegetation.** In the highlands there are few trees, for even in the days of Bruce the country was practically cleared of wood. During the raids of the chiefs and the wars which they made on each other the trees were cut down ruthlessly and burnt with sad waste. In the extreme south and in Gallalad large forests of big trees still exist, and in some places the valleys are well wooded, and the shrubs and bushes give "cover" to many kinds of small animals. The commonest trees are the great sycamores and junipers, the date-palm and the mimosa, the acacia and the tamarisk, the great pines, gum trees of various kinds, and many fruit trees, the peach, the apricot, the orange, the lemon, the fig, the banana, etc. The vine flourishes in the district which is between 5000 and 10,000 feet above sea-level, and on the plateau of Gojam towards the Nile it was carefully cultivated under the direction of some chief or the head of some church or the archimandrite of some monastery. King Theodore had this district laid waste in order to put an end to drunkenness among his people. In the valleys and forests many kinds of fruit-bearing shrubs and small trees are found. The mountains are covered with perennial vegetation right up to their tops. This is due to the heavy mists which cover the ground during the summer rains, and prevent the immediate evaporation of the downpour that would otherwise take place (Bruce, *Travels*, vol. v. p. 98), and the withering of all grasses and plants. Thus an abundant supply of provender is always available for horses and asses, sheep and cattle, goats and pigs, etc. Flowering plants are very numerous, and the "Kosso" ከሱ, a species of climbing rose, is found almost everywhere, its leaves being highly esteemed for their medicinal properties, especially in connection with diseases of the head.

**Wild animals** Bruce thought that no country in the world produced a greater number or variety of quadrupeds, whether tame or wild, than Abyssinia, and the narratives of a long series of big-game hunting travellers attest the truth of his opinion. Among the wild animals may be mentioned: the buffalo, many kinds of gazelle and antelopes, hyaenas of two kinds, dogs, fox, jackal, wolf, wild boar, elephant (held to be unclean), two-horned rhinoceros, giraffe, camelopard, lion, leopard, panther, apes of many kinds, baboons, hares (held to be unclean), hippopotamus, crocodile, lizards, etc.





AN ABYSSINIAN WARRIOR ARMED FOR THE FIGHT



## ABYSSINIA

The "carnivorous bull" is an imaginary animal, and the zebra is not found in Abyssinia as some have stated.

**Birds.** Birds of many kinds, and in extraordinary numbers, are found in all parts of Abyssinia. Among these come first eagles, hawks, and vultures of various kinds, the crane and heron, and the glede is very common. Smaller birds are the swallow, grouse, woodcock, pigeon, duck, etc., and the parrots, jays and many quite small birds have brilliant plumage. Owls are rare, but black and white crows, and ravens with a tuft of hair at the back of the head are common.

The principal crops are: coffee, which is grown chiefly in Kaffa (whence our word coffee), sugar, cotton, limes, lemons, bananas, indigo, millet, grain, Indian corn, barley, beetroot, pepper, lentils, chickpeas, vegetables of various kinds, cabbage, cauliflower, beans, etc.

**Reptiles and Insects.** According to Bruce (*Travels*, vol. v. p. 248) there are no serpents of any kind in Upper Abyssinia, and no remarkable varieties in the southern part except the large snake called the Boa, which is often 24 feet in length, and is as thick as an ordinary man's thigh. He lives in the stagnant grassy pools of rivers, and feeds upon animals of the antelope class, which, having broken all their bones, he swallows whole. Scorpions and the horned viper (*cerastes cornutus*) are common; the latter is about 13 or 14 inches long, and its bite is deadly. The winged basilisks with crests and combs, that live near lakes and destroy all who come near, seem to be fabulous creatures; the "flying fiery serpent," the offspring of the cockatrice, mentioned in Isaiah (xiv. 29) was nothing but a young serpent, and its mother was a serpent. Among the Gallas the serpent is sacred, and offerings of milk are made to it regularly. Insects of many varieties abound in Abyssinia, and the swarms of flies which fill the country from May to September render life in all the lowlands near the Atbarā wellnigh unbearable. Bees exist in myriads all over Abyssinia, and every village, and almost every family cultivate the "honey fly," for now as in Bruce's day, honey is the principal food of all classes of people. The bees build in the cages or baskets which are hung upon the trees, and in the nests which they make for themselves in the trunks or branches of the trees. The colour of the honey varies according

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

to the flowers and herbs on which the bees feed; the honey at Dixan was red like blood, and that made by the bees that build in the earth was nearly black. Great quantities of honey are produced in Gallaland, and when the bees are about to swarm the natives smear the insides of the hives with fragrant substances, and set up shouts in order to make them settle in it. Abyssinia has been described as the "land of milk and honey," and when its immense herds of cattle and untold myriads of bees are considered, the appropriateness of the description is manifest.

**Railways.** A railway has been built by the French from Jibuti to Addis Ababa, the capital, via Dire Dawa, length 495 miles. The Asmara-Keren-Agordāt Railway will it is hoped be eventually pushed on to Gallabat, on the frontier of the Egyptian Sūdān. A large quantity of Italian cotton is transported to Adiquala on the frontier for Gandar. The Posts and Telegraphs are administered by the French.

**Trade.** The total annual value of trade, imports and exports, is about £2,000,000. Trade by the Jibuti Railway, exports and imports, was in 1911 valued at £819,671; in 1912 it was £588,924. The principal articles were cotton shirting and other stuffs, coffee, both Harrari and Abyssinian, hides and skins and wax; rifles 370 metric tons, cartridges 995 metric tons. Trade between Abyssinia and British Somali ports was valued at £74,000; trade between Boran, Dagodi and Italian Somaliland was valued at £27,900. The Sūdān trade is carried on chiefly via Gambela on the frontier, but Gallabat and Roseires share in it. Export duty from Abyssinia is 10 per cent. *ad valorem*, which is collected before the goods leave the plateau. At Gambela there is an import duty into the Sūdān of 6 per cent. of which 1 per cent. is export duty from Abyssinia, and 5 per cent. import duty into the Sūdān. Gambela is on the Baro river, and is leased to the Sūdān for transport trade. The journey to Khartūm takes seven days, and from Khartūm to Gambela eleven days. In 1911 exports were £E37,754, and imports were £E27,992; total £E65,712. In 1912 exports were £E38,720, and imports were £E34,280; total £E73,000. The exports are: Hides and skins, chiefly from Jimma and Nekempti. Wax, of which about 600 tons are exported to Europe annually. Ivory, Government monopoly. Some was sold in London in 1912

## ABYSSINIA

at £107 per cwt. In 1911 about 68 tons were exported at Jibuti, value £45,480. Rubber is a Government monopoly in the hands of a merchant; the centre of the trade is Goro near the source of the Baro river. The export of rubber in 1911 amounted to 3572 *frasulas*, *i.e.* about 1180 tons. Coffee grows wild in many places, and immense forests of it exist unutilized in the provinces of Guma and Kaffa; the Arabs call the tree the "tree of Kaffa," whence our name for the berry. There are two kinds, the Abyssinian which grows from Arusi and Sidamo to Western Abyssinia, and the Harrari which grows in the district of Harrar. The Kaffa coffee is superior to the Brazilian; it is mixed with Mocha coffee at Aden and sold as Mocha. In 1911, 1,349,989 kilos were exported, the value being £55,364. Civet is obtained in Wallega and Jimma; the trade in this article is mostly in the hands of Aden Arabs. Gold is obtained from the Birbir river near Gambela, but in very small quantities; the quartz gold found is not worth working. Sugar cane plantations have been made on the River Baro near Gambela, and there is much demand for sugar in the Egyptian Sūdān.

Money was first struck in recent times by Menyelek II. On the obverse is the king's effigy in profile, facing right, wearing the triple crown surmounted by the so-called Coptic Cross. The legend is Jan-Menyelek II, king of the kings of Ethiopia, and beneath is the date of his accession, 1881, *i.e.* 1889. On the reverse is an Abyssinian lion wearing a crown, and the legend is "Conquering lion of the tribe of Judah." A third legend reads "Ethiopia stretches out her hand only to God." This last is a version of Psalm lxxviii. 23 where the Ethiopic text has, "Ethiopia shall make her hands to reach God"; the published Amharic version of the words has the same meaning. Silver dollars are of two kinds, *viz.* the Maria Thérèse, which the natives call "talari" (*i.e.* thaler) and is accepted everywhere, and the dollar struck by Menyelek II which is current chiefly in Addis Ababa. The latter weighs 433½ grains, and its value is about two shillings, or in Egypt 9 big piastres. In many parts of Abyssinia the money struck by Menyelek is not regarded with favour, and whilst the Maria Thérèse dollar maintains its value outside Abyssinia, I have often bought the Menyelek dollar in the Sūdān and Aswān for 3—5 piastres apiece. The commonest copper coin is the *ķuersh* ቀረሽ: *ķuērasha*, the value of which was

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

ordered by Menyelek II to be the one-sixteenth of a dollar (*talari*). In many parts of Abyssinia money has no fixed value as in Europe, but is regarded as merchandize, and its value varies from time to time considerably. Thus in some places the talari was worth only ten piastres, whilst in others it was worth sixteen, or even more. Menyelek II tried to stabilize the value of this coin, but only partially succeeded. In some districts coins made of iron are still current. In some districts money made of salt is current. It was first introduced into Abyssinia by one of the tribes of the 'Afar called "Amōlē," and the piece of salt which takes the place of a coin is known as Amōlē አጥሌ to this day. The Amōlē is a piece of rock salt from the great plain of Ragad which lies between Dankali and Tigray, and is wholly covered with a thick layer of rock salt. It has the shape of a whetstone and varies in length from 10 to 12 inches, and in width and thickness from 1½ to 2½ inches in the thickest part; its weight is about 17 ozs. The value of the Amōlē varies from time to time and place to place, from 10 to 40 being equal in value to one talari.

Some of the pagan kings of Aksūm had a coinage, and among these were :

1. Aphilas ΑΦΙΛΑC ∪ ΒΑCΙΛΕΥC ΑΖΩΜΙΤΩΝ ΒΙCΙΔΙΜΗΛΗ, who is perhaps Filyā or Safelyā of the King Lists, was king of the Aksūmites and a native of Dimēlē.

2. Endybis ΕΝΔΥΒΙC ∪ ΒΑCΙΛΕΥC, who is perhaps the Hendōr of the King Lists, was king of the Aksūmites and a native of Dakhy ΔΑΧΥ.

3. Alalmiryis (?) ΑΛΑΛΜΙΡΥΙC or Alalmidis ΑΛΑΛΜΙΔΙC, who is perhaps 'Ella 'Amidā, the father of 'Ezānā.

4. 'Ezānā **ዐዘኑ**, in Greek *Αειζανας*, *Ηζανα*, *Ηεζανα*, the son of 'Ella 'Amidā, the "Constantine of Abyssinia," who reigned at Aksūm in the 4th century of our Era. These four kings were pagans.

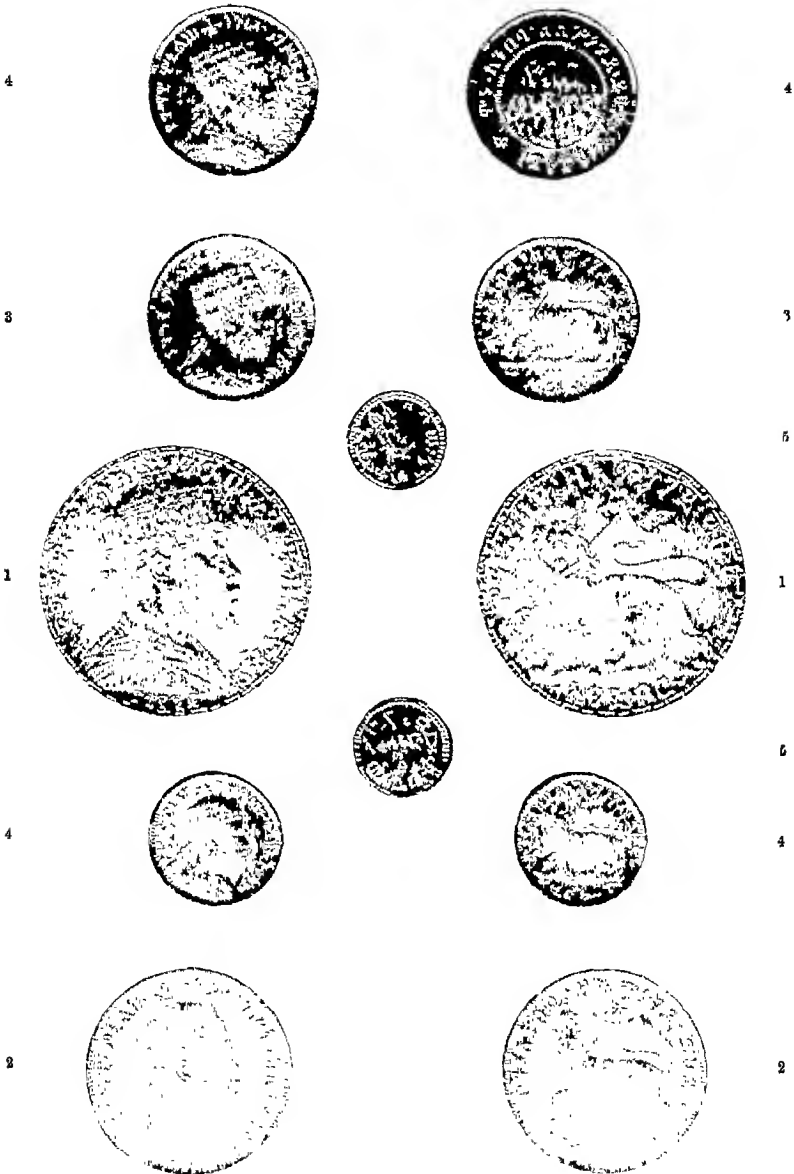
5. Kaleb, the son of Thezena, ΧΑΛΗΒ ΒΙΟC ΘΕ(Z)ΕΝΑ, who was also a king of Aksūm, was a Christian, as were the following:

1. Gersem ΓΕΡCΕΜ: the Biblical name Gersom (?).
2. Yathlía (?) ΙΑΘΛΙΑ (?).
3. Ochlas (?) ΟΧΛΑC (?).
4. Be'ese Anaapheon (?) ΒΙCΙ ΑΝΑΑΦΕΩC.

COINS OF MENVELEK II

OBVERSE

REVERSE



- 1 THE BÈRE OR SILVER DOLLAR OF MENVELEK II.
- 2 THE HALF DOLLAR (YABÈK NAD) WEIGHI THE HALF WAKFI, OR HAIT DI AGHVI.
- 3 THE QUARTER DOLLAR (YABÈK RUB) IN SHEAF.
- 4 THE QUARTER DOLLAR (YABÈK MATÓWANÉ) IN COILER.
- 5 ONE EIGHTH OF A DOLLAR (YABÈK TEMÉK).





## ABYSSINIA

5. 'Ella Gabaz ΕΜΑΓΑΒΑΖΗΤ.

6. Joël. The legend on his coins is in Ethiopic characters and read :

**ነገሠአዩአለ = ንጉሥ፣ ኢዮኤል፣  
ከረሰተሰመሰለነ = ክርስቶስ፣ ምስሌነ።**

*i.e.* "King Joël. Christ with us."

7. Wayzēnā (?) OYAZHN. Some of his coins bear the legend in Ethiopic characters thus :

**ዘዩደለለአሐዘበ = ዝይድሉ፣ ለአሕዛብ፣  
ዘወዘነዘነገሠ = ዘወዜና፣ ዘንጉሥ።**

*i.e.* "May this be useful to the peoples. Of Wazēnā, of the king."

8. 'Armākh. Copper coins of his bear the legend :

**ነገሠአረመሐ = ንጉሥ፣ አርማአ።  
ፈሠሐለዩከነለአሐዘበ = ፍሥሐ፣ ለይኩን፣ ለአሕዛብ።**

*i.e.* "King 'Armākh. Gladness let there be to the peoples."

A variant of the second line is **ሠሀለወስለመ = ሠሀል፣ ወስላም፣**

*i.e.* "mercy and peace."

9. Ḥatazā (?). His coins bear the legend :

**ነገሠሐተዘ፣ = ንጉሥ፣ ዘተዘ (?)።  
ሠሀለለአሐዘበ = ሠሀል፣ ለአሕዛብ።**

*i.e.* "King Ḥatazā (?). Mercy to the peoples."

10. Mḥygsn (?) መሐዩገሰነ፣. The vocalization of this name is unknown.

Attempts to decipher the legends in Greek and Ethiopic letters on Abyssinian coins were made by Longperrier and d'Abbadie, but the first to obtain trustworthy results were Prideaux, Dillmann and Halévy. Since their efforts were published many more coins have been discovered, and the latest and best account of Abyssinian numismatics is by Littmann in his *Deutsche Aksum-Expedition*, 4 vols., Berlin, 1913. There the reader will find drawings and reproductions of all the principal types of the coins of the pagan and Christian kings, with reference to authorities, and photographic facsimiles of coins.

**Weights.** The 1 quintal (cwt.), pound, ounce, half ounce, drachm, scruple (24 grammes) are in common use, and we have the *ratel* (= 0.99 lb.), and the *ferāslā* ፍራስላ፣ = 25 *ratel* = 37 lbs. Four *ferāslās* = 1½ kantars (1 kantar = 99 lbs.), and 59.3 *ferāslās* = 1 metric

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

ton or 2226 *ratels*. Ivory and rubber are weighed by the *waggia*; the *waggia* of ivory = 480 dollars, and the *waggia* of rubber 640 dollars. The load of a mule is 96 kilos, of a camel 192 kilos, and of an ass 50 kilos. Measures. A *madga* = 28 litres, a *tchēn* ጫግግ = 280 litres, a *qunnā* = 4.67 litres, a *dawulla* = 20 *qunnā*. Linear measure. The cubit, foot, palm, thumb, kilometre, mile, league = 2 or more kilometres.

**Minerals.** In Shoa large substrata of granite covered over with clay are found, basalt and trachite are found in the beds of rivers, there is lignite in Entoto and Dabra Libānōs, and small quantities of gold have been obtained from thin lodes in quartz formations. In the south the natives wash gold out from the sands of the rivers. Some authorities quoting South African legends assert that the kings of Aksūm worked the gold mines of Zimbabwe and Monomotapa, and the Abyssinians themselves have a tradition that gold was at one time obtained in such large quantities from the western slope of the plateau that the chains with which prisoners were bound were made of gold. At the present time little gold is found, and that little is used up in the country, none being exported. Iron and copper occur in large quantities. From Semēn come the semi-precious stones, turquoise, carnelian, jaspers of various colours, and agates. Tigray is famous for its rock salt, which, as already said, is used as currency, and the thermal springs in various places prove the existence of beds of sulphur and magnesia.

### THE ABYSSINIAN CALENDAR

This Calendar is a subject of considerable difficulty; no one is certain about its origin, and it is not clear when the Abyssinians adopted it. Originally their year consisted of two seasons only, a dry season and a wet season, or as we might say summer and winter. Now they have four seasons, መጸው spring, በጋ summer, ጸደይ autumn and ክረምት winter.—Maşaw, Bagā, Şaday, Keramet. Their year contains 12 months of thirty days each, and 5 epagomenal or supplementary days; in leap year another day is added. The 12 months are:

1. Maskaram መስከረም begins on August 29 of the Julian Calendar.

2. Teqemt ጥቅምት begins Sept. 28.

## ABYSSINIA

3. Khadār	<b>ኅዳር፡</b>	begins Oct. 28.
4. Tākhshāsh	<b>ታኅሣሥ፡</b>	begins Nov. 27.
5. Ṭer	<b>ጥር፡</b>	begins Dec. 27.
6. Yakātīt	<b>የካቲት፡</b>	begins Jan. 26.
7. Magābīt	<b>መጋቢት፡</b>	begins Feb. 27.
8. Mīyāzyā	<b>ሚያዝያ፡</b>	begins Mar. 27 (26).
9. Genböt	<b>ግንቦት፡</b>	begins April 26.
10. Sanē	<b>ሰኔ፡</b>	begins May 26.
11. Ḥamlē	<b>ሐምሌ፡</b>	begins June 25.
12. Naḥasē	<b>ነሐሴ፡</b>	begins July 25.

The reformed Calendar, which was due to the activities of Pope Gregory XIII in 1582, changed the date of the first day of Maskaram, the first month of the Ethiopian year, from August 29 to Sept. 8. Subsequently the date was changed from Sept. 8 to Sept. 9, and later from Sept. 9 to Sept. 10. According to the Gregorian Calendar, Maskaram begins on Sept. 8, Ṭeḳemt on Oct. 8, Khadār on Nov. 7, Tākhshāsh on Dec. 7, Ṭer on Jan. 6, Yakātīt on Feb. 5, Magābīt on March 7, Mīyāzyā on April 6, Genböt on May 6, Sanē on June 5, Ḥamlē on July 5, Naḥasē on Aug. 4, and Pāguemēn on Sept. 3.

The five epagomenal or supplementary days are called Pāguemēn **አጥሜን፡** or the "Little [month]" **ንቀስ፡**. According to the reckoning of the Abyssinians the first day of Maskaram, *i.e.* New Year's Day, falls on August 29, a date which was chosen by them to commemorate the Era of the Martyrs (or Era of Diocletian) which began on August 29, 284. But the first day of Maskaram is usually the 11th of September according to European nations. The Abyssinians declared that the Creation of the World took place at the autumnal equinox 5500 years before the birth of Christ, and for some time dated events by the year of the world, A.M.; but later they adopted the Era of Diocletian, by which they lost ten years, though at the same time, because they had antedated the birth of Christ (according to the Era of Dionysius Exiguus, they gained three or two years). The net result of all this is that on and from Sept. 11 to the end of our year their year is seven years behind our date; on and from Jan. 1 to the 5th day of Pāguemēn (Sept. 10) it is eight years behind. In computing dates of Abyssinian

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

events further difficulty is caused by their calculations as regard leap years, and it is wellnigh impossible to explain why their New Year's Day, the first of Maskaram, is represented by September 11 and not August 29. (See Ludolf, *Historia*, p. 385, and C. F. Rey, *Unconquered Abyssinia*, London, 1923, p. 161 f.) Some think that the Abyssinians, who were always greatly influenced by the Jacobite teachers of Syria, adopted the so-called Era of Antioch which was introduced into that country by Panodorus, an Egyptian monk who flourished in the reign of Arcadius. In his *Chronographia* he reduced the age of the world by ten years, and made the birth of Christ to take place three years later than other chronologers.

The manuscripts show that the Ethiopians used at least four Eras in dating events, viz.:

The Era of the Incarnation.

The Era of the Martyrs, or Era of Diocletian.

The Era of the World.

The Era of Mercy, in which the years were reckoned according to the great lunar cycle. The Era of the Incarnation and the Era of the Martyrs are practically the same, but it may be noted that the Era of the Martyrs was not established to commemorate the Martyrs. It probably owes its origin to reasons which were connected with the fixing of Easter by the Coptic Church. The efforts of Dionysius Exiguus, Anianus, Panodorus and Anatolius to establish a system of chronology have made Ethiopian Chronology a matter of considerable difficulty. A very useful monograph on the subject has been written by M. Chaine (*La Chronologie des temps Chrétiens de l'Égypte et de l'Éthiopie*, Paris, 1925), and to this the reader is referred for a general history of the works of the chronographers, and a valuable series of tables.

The names of the days of the week are Ĕhūd ኢዑድ: Sunday (1st day), Sañō ሰኞ: Monday (2nd day), Mākṣaṣñō ማክሰኞ: Tuesday (3rd day), Rabū ረቡ: Wednesday (4th day), Amūs አሙስ: Thursday (5th day), Areb አርብ: Friday (literally, the Eve of the Sabbath, or Saturday), Ḳedāmē ቅዳሜ: Saturday (literally, the first day). The influence of the Copts has made the Abyssinians to call their months by the *Arabic forms* of their Coptic names, and thus we have:

## ABYSSINIA

1. Töt	<b>ቶት:</b>	Coptic	Thoth.
2. Bābē	<b>ባቤ:</b>	„	Paopi.
3. Khatūr	<b>ኀተር:</b>	„	{ Athor. Hathor.
4. Kīyāhak	<b>ኀያህኀ:</b>	„	Choiak.
5. Ṭūbā	<b>ጡባ:</b>	„	Tōbi.
6. 'Amshīr	<b>አምሲር:</b>	„	Makhir.
7. Barmahāt	<b>በርመሃት:</b>	„	Phamenoth.
8. Barmōdā	<b>በርሞደ:</b>	„	Pharmuthi.
9. Bashansh	<b>በሸንሽ:</b>	„	Pachons.
10. Bā'ūnē	<b>በዑኔ:</b>	„	Paōni.
11. 'Abīb	<b>አቢብ:</b>	„	Epēp.
12. Masarī	<b>መሰሪ:</b>	„	Mesore.

The cardinal and intermediate points of the compass are : Dabūb **ደቡብ:** South, Samēn **ሰሜን:** North, Meshrāk **ምሥራቅ:** East, Me'rāb **ምዕራብ:** West, Lībā **ሊባ:** South-east, 'Azēb **አዜብ:** South-west, Mes'e **ምስሪ:** North-east, Bāher **ባሕር:** North-west.

**Climate.** The Abyssinian area has a typically tropical climate, except for the strip of low-lying country on the east, between the plateau and the Red Sea, where there are regular winter rains. October to April is an almost rainless period, the prevalent winds being from the north and east. This dry season is followed by the rainy season, which is preceded by the short period of the lesser rains lasting about three weeks in Kaffā in March, and Shoa and Eritrea in March and April. The highest temperature is met with on the western frontier : speaking generally the mean range of the temperature is from 50° to 85° Fahrenheit. Winds from Oct. to May are from the north and north-west ; during the rainy season the winds are from the south. The great rains begin on the plateau in June and cease at the end of September or beginning of October. The mean annual rainfall on the plateau round Addis Ababa is estimated at 1300 millimetres ; on the Chok plateau 1500 millimetres ; on the Gondar plain up to the Takaze river it is 1000 millimetres ; to the north of the Semēn mountains 750 millimetres until the basin of the Mareb is reached for which about 500 millimetres may be estimated. (See Lyons, *Physiography of the River*

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

*Nile and its Basin*, Cairo, 1906, pp. 194-211.) Thus in one part of Abyssinia the mean annual rainfall is in some places as little as 20 inches, and in others as much as 60 inches. Volcanoes. The forms of many of the rocks and rocky formations proclaim their volcanic origin, and many craters exist on the eastern slope of the plateau. And smoking hills, geysers and hot springs are found in many places. Earthquakes have been comparatively frequent in recent years. A large town in Tambēn was swallowed up in 1855, leaving in its place a lake from ten to twelve miles long (De Castro, *op. cit.*, p. 84).

### THE RELIGIONS OF THE ABYSSINIANS

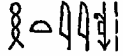
According to a very ancient and widespread tradition in Abyssinia, the Abyssinians were descended from Ham, the second son of Noah, who with his brothers Shem and Japhet were born before the Flood. The sons of Ham were the fathers of the peoples of Kūsh (Nubia), Mišraim (Egypt), Pūṭ (Libya) and Kenā'an (Phœnicia). Kūsh was the father of the peoples of Sēbhā, Khāvilāh, Sabhtā, Ra'māh and Sabhtēkā, all of whom seem to have been dwellers on the western and eastern shores of the Red Sea, and perhaps in northern Arabia and Somaliland. If this tradition be accepted it follows as a matter of course that the Abyssinians were never at any time pagans, and that they always worshipped the One God of Noah and his descendants. But not all the dwellers in Abyssinia were descendants of Noah, and there is every reason for believing that the non-Semitic peoples of Abyssinia worshipped other gods than the God of Noah, from the earliest to the latest times. The Egyptians, Nubians, Libyans and Canaanites worshipped many gods and goddesses, and in Abyssinia the worship of the God of Noah was probably confined to a limited number of families, and probably, at first, to a small part of the country. Another Abyssinian tradition gives us the name of the town or city wherein the descendants of Noah worshipped God, namely Aksūm አክሱም: which the Greeks called Ἀἰξουμῖς, Ἀἰξούμη, Ἀξουμῖς, and was at once the metropolis of the province of Tigray, and the capital of a kingdom of the same name. Aksūm lies on the parallel 14° north latitude and is about 130 miles west of its seaport which the Greeks called Ἀδούλη, or Ἀδουλις, or Ἀδούλει.

## ABYSSINIA

According to one tradition it was Menyelek I, the son of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, who made Aksūm the centre of the worship of the God of Noah, David, king of Israel, and Solomon, but another makes it occupy this position at a much earlier period. This latter tradition is reported by Littmann (*op. cit.*, I. p. 38), who heard it from a native priest called Gabra Wāhed, and had it written down in the dialect of Tigray. It states that "Ham begot Kūsh, Kūsh begot Aethiōpis, after whom the country is called Aethiōpia to this day. Aethiōpis was buried in Aksūm, and his grave is known there to this day. It was said that a fire used to burn in it, and that if any donkey's excrement or any bit of stuff fell into it it was consumed. Aethiōpis begot 'Aksūmāwī, 'Aksūmāwī begot Malakya 'Aksūm, and begot also Sūm, Nafās, Bagi'ō, Kūdūki, 'Akhōrō, Fasheba. These six sons of 'Aksūmāwī became the fathers of Aksūm. When they wished to divide their land, there came a man called Māy Biḥ, and as people say divided their land as an agent. Each of the six gave him two acres of land and he settled down with them." Thus Aksūm derived its name from 'Aksūmāwī, as the whole country took its name from Aethiōpis a hitherto unknown ancestor of the Ethiōpians, according to native tradition.

Nowhere in Abyssinian literature is it stated what form of religion was practised by the descendants of Kūsh in Africa, but one tradition says that a dragon or serpent called Waināba ruled the country for four hundred years, and that the monster was slain by a man called 'Angabō, the predecessor and father of the Queen of Sheba on the throne of Abyssinia. This serpent lived in Tambēn, a district to the south of Aksūm, and when it became known that it was coming to Aksūm, 'Angabō promised the Aksūmites that he would kill the monster if they would agree to make him king. To this they assented, and 'Angabō made his plans for the killing of the serpent. He worked magic on the road by which it would come, and he hid a magical object in the form of an iron instrument, or weapon, under the surface of the road, presumably with the view of wounding the serpent. Waināba set out on the road for Aksūm, and as he proceeded on his way he shot out fire from his body on the right hand and on the left, and passing on between the flames he came to Aksūm and died. He was buried in Māy Waynō where

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

his grave is to be seen to this day. The legend does not say if the iron object buried in the ground wounded the serpent and caused his death, but it may be assumed that it did. It will be remembered that a somewhat similar story was current among the ancient Egyptians about the Sun-god Rā and the goddess Isis. The latter wished to know the secret name whereby Rā lived, and as the god refused to impart it to her she determined to destroy him. She made a serpent in the form of a dart , and having worked magic on it she threw it on the path over which Rā would pass. When the god came to the serpent it bit him and but for the incantations of Isis after he had, when about to expire, revealed his secret name to her, he would have perished. Modern African peoples like the Unyoro fix puff adders on the tracks of buffaloes, and when the buffaloes pass, the adders strike at them and kill them (Johnston, *Uganda*, vol. II. p. 584).

The tradition quoted above shows that the cult of the snake existed in Abyssinia before the reign of 'Angabō, which lasted 200 years, and that the working of magic was known and practised by the Aksūmites. In other words many of the early Abyssinians were pagans, and in the south and south-western parts of their country many of them had either no religion of any kind, or paid adoration to trees, mountains, rivers, stones, animals, birds and reptiles. Such peoples as were negroes or were of negro origin believed in magic and witchcraft, and probably celebrated the terrible and often obscene rites which are common in some parts of the Sūdān at the present time. It is quite certain from the importance which is attached by ancient Abyssinian writers to the arrival of Menyelek I in Aksūm with the Ark of the Covenant which he had stolen from Jerusalem, that it marked the establishment of a new era in the religious life of Abyssinia. In fact the king and his court and the principal Abyssinians of Aksūm abandoned their native cults, and under the direction of the Levites who came with the Ark of the Covenant, they adopted the Religion of Israel. The mainspring of this great Reformation was Queen Mākēdā, the Queen of Sheba or Sābā, who had visited Solomon in Jerusalem and had become by him the mother of Menyelek I. The Kebra Nagast makes it clear that up to the time of her intercourse with Solomon she had



## ABYSSINIA

worshipped the gods of her people, that is to say the gods of the Sabaeans. The history of the Sabaeans is difficult to follow, but their home was undoubtedly in Yaman, in the south of Arabia, and they seem to have been living there as early as B.C. 1100. Originally they were probably nomads, but at a later period some of their chiefs became rich and powerful kings, perhaps about B.C. 900. Their district lay on or near the great trade route from China and India, and they seem to have derived their wealth both from the profits made by their own merchant caravans, and the dues which they levied on the merchants who carried on their trade with the East, by the way of their country. The northern part of Arabia was at that time ruled by the kings of Ma'in, with whom the kings of Saba often came into conflict. The early rulers of Saba were priests, and bore the title of "mukarrib" (?) and not "king." The exact extent of their dominions, and the duration of their kingdom are not known. Their chronology is uncertain, for their monuments are dated by an era the beginning of which is unknown. On these points see Müller, *Sabaische Denkmäler*, Vienna, 1883; *Denkmäler aus Arabien*, Vienna, 1889; *Denkmäler aus Abessinien*, Vienna, 1894; E. Glaser, *Skizze*, Berlin, 1890; *Die Abessinier in Arabien*, Munich, 1895; Weber, *Studien sur sudarabischen Altertumskunde*, 3 vols., Berlin, 1901-08. Among the gods of Saba were Shams, the Sun-god, 'Athtar=Ishtar (Ashtoreth, Aphrodite, Venus), Haubas, perhaps a form of the Moon-god, and Almaḳah or Almakuh; besides these certain star-gods were worshipped. The functions and attributes of Almaḳah are not known, but he seems to have been an early indigenous god, perhaps a god of generation, of Yaman; all that is known about him will be found in Nielsen, *Der Sabaische Gott Imuḳah*, Strassburg, 1910. The principal gods of the Yamanites were the sun and the moon, and it is probable that the cult of the naked goddess was widespread, even as it was in Syria and other parts of Western Asia.

The conversion of Māḳēdā to the Religion of Israel must have had a marked effect on her people when she returned to her own country, but the queen's new religion did not become the official religion of Abyssinia until her son brought to Aksūm from Jerusalem the Ark of the Covenant, and introduced the worship of

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

Yahweh and a government based on the laws laid down by Moses. Abyssinian tradition asserts positively that the kings who succeeded Menyelek I followed in his footsteps, but nothing is known of these kings and no historical evidence that supports this view is extant. It is certain that the power of Aksūm declined in the 6th and 5th centuries B.C. and that some of the Ptolemies were masters both of the city and the country round about it. This being so it is doubtful if the religion of the Hebrews maintained its supremacy among the Abyssinians at that period. Outside Aksūm the people generally clung to their old cults, and it seems as if some of the cults peculiar to Egypt had found adherents in Aksūm. Bruce relates in his *Travels* (vol. II. p. 55) that his friend the king of Abyssinia brought back to Gondar from Tigray the inscribed stele of which he gives drawings on plates VIII and IX. The stele was 14 inches long and 6 inches broad, and on each side of it are figures of Egyptian gods sculptured in relief, and hieroglyphic inscriptions. It belongs to the class of Egyptian antiquities which are commonly known as "Cippi of Horus," and was made in Egypt, where many such objects have been found. They were placed in houses and temples in order to protect those who were in them from the attacks of evil spirits and noxious animals and reptiles, and the hieroglyphic inscriptions cut upon them were believed to be spells of great power. The cippus of Horus was a talisman or amulet, and it appears for the first time in Egypt at the close of the rule of the XXVIth Dynasty, when superstition in its most exaggerated form was general. The finest known example is that which is commonly known as the Metternich Stele, because it was given to Prince Metternich by Muḥammad 'Alī Pāshā; it was dug up in 1828 in a Franciscan monastery in Alexandria. Fortunately the name of the king in whose reign it was made is found upon it, viz. Nectanebus I, who reigned from B.C. 378 to B.C. 360. For drawings of this cippus and copies of the text and translations see Golénischeff, *Metternichstele*, Leipzig, 1877; and Budge, *Egyptian Literature*, London, 1912, p. 142 ff.

The finding of the cippus described by Bruce in Aksūm proves that there was intercourse between Egypt and that city early in the 4th century B.C., and that the superstitions and beliefs in magic and witchcraft of the Egyptians were known to the

## ABYSSINIA

Abyssinians at that time. It is probable that the kings of the XXVI Dynasty endeavoured to establish trade connections between Egypt and Abyssinia both by sea and by land, and a century or so later the influence of the Greeks in Tigray was very considerable. Thus, like Alexandria at a later time, Aksūm became a city of mixed cults, Hebraic, Egyptian and Greek, and certainly after it became the metropolis of Tigray and the greatest commercial centre in Africa in the 1st century A.D., its rulers or kings were pagans, and they worshipped the sun and moon, like their Yamanite ancestors. The Hebrew religion introduced by Maḳḳēdā and her son had become submerged, at least that is what the known history of the period shows.

In the 4th century Christianity was introduced into Abyssinia, but how and by whom is not quite certain. According to Rufinus Tyrannius (born at Aquileia about 340, died 410) Meropeus, a Syrian merchant, set out in a ship for India intending to open up a business connection with the Indians. He took with him two young Christian kinsmen who were brothers called Frumentius and Aedesius, and as they were sailing down the Red Sea they landed at a certain place, probably to revictual the ship. The natives seized the merchant and his crew, but they spared the two brothers whom they took to the king, and he made Frumentius his chancellor, and Aedesius his cupbearer or butler. When the king died the queen entreated the brothers to remain with her until her son was grown up, and having seen how able and capable a man Frumentius was she begged him to assist her in ruling her kingdom. Whilst doing this he endeavoured to obtain for such Christians as came to the country with the European merchants facilities for trade, and permission to build prayer-houses, and was, it seems, successful. When the prince arrived at man's estate the two brothers returned to their own country, and Aedesius was made a presbyter of a church at Tyre. It was from him that Rufinus gained his information. There were, it seems, a considerable number of Christians in Abyssinia when Frumentius left it, for he went to Alexandria and asked Athanasius to send there a bishop to preach and teach the body of Christians who were without a leader or shepherd. Thereupon Athanasius consecrated him bishop of Aksūm before A.D. 370, and he has been regarded

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

as the founder of the Church of Abyssinia. The translation of the Scriptures from Greek into Gē'ez is said to have been made by him.

We may assume that Meropius landed at Adulis, the seaport of Aksūm, which was then a flourishing commercial centre, and there is reason to believe that there were many Christian Greek merchants settled in the neighbourhood. There is sufficient proof that Frumentius was consecrated bishop of Aksūm by Athanasius (see Guidi, *La Chiesa Abissinia*, Rome, 1922), and the Abyssinian writers call him "Abbā Salāmā, the revealer of the light." They also say that he brought the knowledge of Christ among their ancestors during the reign of two brothers called 'Abrehā and 'Aṣbehā, the sons of Ṣēnfa-Ar'ēd (II), at a time when part of the population followed the Jewish Religion, and the other part worshipped the "Serpent." Abbā Salāmā worked miracles, and the people believed and received Christian baptism. The conversion of the Abyssinians took place (according to the Chronicle edited by Basset, Paris, 1882, p. 97) in the year 333 of the birth of Christ. Now by the use of the word "Serpent" we must not think that an actual reptile is referred to, but must understand that a part of the people adhered to the old pagan cults which their ancestors had followed in the days of the fabulous Serpent King, among them being the cult of the serpent. It is quite certain that Christianity was introduced into Abyssinia in the first half or so of the 4th century, but to say that the Abyssinians were converted to Christianity at that time is incorrect, as Guidi, our first authority on the subject, has pointed out<sup>1</sup>. The Agau or peoples in the south had kept their animistic cults, the Falashas had a kind of Judaism which was very

<sup>1</sup> Ora se si pone mente all' estensione dell' Abisinia, alle poche vie, alla rudimentale amministrazione dello Stato, si ammetterà facilmente che introduzione del Cristianesimo non vuol punto dire conversione di tutto o gran parte del paese alla religione cristiana; e se gli Agau—i quali non avevano nè potevano avere, semibarbari come erano, un libro sacro che ne fissasse in qualche modo le credenze—avrebbero potuto facilmente esser convertiti ad una religione superiore, nel nostro caso ciò non era punto facile, perchè siffatta religione superiore era professata dai Semiti loro eterni nemici, dai quali si son tenuti sempre lontani...E se introduzione del Cristianesimo non vuol dire conversione di tutto il paese, molto meno deve farci credere che i Vangeli fossero subito tradotti nell' antico etiopico o ge'ez; traduzione non necessaria per il nucleo primitivo di Cristiani che dovevano intendere il greco.



SAINT LUKE THE EVANGELIST PAINTING THE PORTRAITS OF CHRIST AND  
THE VIRGIN MARY

FROM BRIT. MUS. MS. ORIENT. NO. 622 FOL. 4A



## ABYSSINIA

different from the ordinary post-Biblical Judaism, and the Aksūmites worshipped Heaven, and Earth, and Sea (?), and a War-god called Maḥram. To convert and baptize all these in the space of a few years was clearly impossible.

Now, the narrative of Rufinus says that the first convert of Frumentius was the king of Aksūm himself, but he does not, unfortunately, say who this king was, and it seems as if the Abyssinians themselves were uncertain about his name. Thanks to the new material which has been discovered and made available for study by Enno Littmann and Theodor von Lüpke in their invaluable Report on the German Expedition to Aksūm in 1906, it seems to be certain that the king over whom Frumentius obtained such great influence was 'Ēzānā ሄዳና (Aeζαναγ or Aιζαναγ) the son of 'Ella-'Amīdā, a native of Ḥalēn. This king who calls himself sometimes the son of the War-god Maḥram መሐረም and sometimes the son of the War-god Ares, was a mighty king and his kingdom comprised Ḥimyar, Raidān, Ethiopia, Saba', Saḥēn, Ṣiyāmō, Begā, Kāsū (Kūsh). He was undoubtedly one of the greatest kings of Aksūm, and in the early years of his reign he was a pagan. In one inscription (Littmann, No. 10) he says plainly that he commits himself to the care of 'Astar (the Moon-god), and Beḥēr, the country, and Medr (the Earth-god), and on his earlier coins he gives a crescent and a circle ☉, symbols of the Sabaeen cults of the sun and the moon. But in the later years of his reign we find something very different. In his great inscription (Littmann, No. 11) instead of his own name and titles forming the opening words he begins "By the might of the Lord of Heaven አግዛእ-ሰማይ፣ Who in heaven and upon earth is mightier than everything which exists," and his name and titles follow. In line 5 he speaks of the "Lord of Heaven, Who hath made me lord, Who to all eternity reigns the Perfect One." In line 7 he says, "In (or by) the might of the Lord of All I made war on Nōbā," and in line 33 he says that his soldiers conquered and returned in safety "by the might of the Lord of the Land" (or Country). Now "Lord of the Country," 'Ēgzi' Beḥēr, አግዛእ-ብሔር፣ is the title by which the name Yahweh is frequently rendered in the Ethiopic translation of the Bible, and it is never applied to any heathen god; it interchanges with 'Amlāk አምላክ፣ both being equivalent to Yahweh

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

and ὁ κύριος. And on the coins which 'Ēzānā had struck during the later years of his reign evidence of the change which took place in his religious views is apparent. The same legend Πζανας βασιλεὺς Ἀξωμιτῶν Βισι Αλενε occurs on the earlier and later coins, but on the later instead of the crescent and circle ☽ we find the Greek or Maltese Cross ☩. There is no possibility of mistaking what the change of symbols means; when the later coins were struck 'Ēzānā had, officially at least, renounced paganism and adopted Christianity. Though he was the lord and master of hundreds of thousands of fierce warriors he could not compel all his subjects to cast aside the cults in which they had been born and bred, but he could make his court and his officials and the upper class of Aksūm accept the new religion, and there is pretty strong evidence that he did.

Some who have studied the two groups of inscriptions of 'Ēzānā have thought that 'Ēzānā the pagan and 'Ēzānā the Christian were two distinct kings, but this view is against the evidence, for the contents of the two groups of inscriptions show that they were one and the same king: 'Ēzānā is called the "son of 'Ella-'Amīdā" in both groups, and he had a brother called Shai'azānā; it is impossible to believe that there were two 'Ēzānās, one a pagan and the other a Christian, each being the son of 'Ella-'Amīdā and each having a brother called Shai'azānā, in Greek Σαΐαζανα. It may be argued that the Greek cross on the coins of 'Ēzānā proves nothing, for the cross was known to many eastern peoples, including the Assyrians, for we see the ☩ on the breast of Ashurnasir-pal on his sculptured stele in the British Museum (No. 847). The 'Ēzānā whom Frumentius converted, and who had a brother called Shai'azānā, was certainly a pagan, but the two brothers to whom the Emperor Constantius wrote in 356, and whom he calls Αἰζανας and Σαζανας the ἀδελφοὶ τιμιώτατοι, were certainly Christians. Constantius wrote urging them to replace Frumentius by one Theophilus, an Arian, and pointing out to them that the canonicity of his appointment was very doubtful. And he was afraid lest Athanasius should go to Aksūm and corrupt the people with his accursed doctrines. For the text of the letter of Constantius see J. H. Newman, *Athanasius, Historical Tracts*, pp. 182, 183. Putting all these facts together it seems that





III LORD CHRISJ

FROM BRITISH MUSEUM ORIENTAL NO 620, 101 10A



## ABYSSINIA

the only possible conclusion we can arrive at is that 'Ēzānā was the first Abyssinian king to make Christianity the official religion of his country, and to allow Christian merchants to trade unhampered, and to build houses of prayer or churches in it.

Now Abyssinian tradition as given in the native Chronicles and King Lists teaches that Christianity came into Abyssinia in the time of 'Abrehā አቦርጎጎጎ and 'Asbehā አጽብጎጎ the sons of Sēnfa-Ar'ēd II, and that the man who brought it was Abbā Salāmā, who was no other than Frumentius. Abbā Salāmā worked miracles and the people believed in him and allowed themselves to be baptized by him. But we have seen above that 'Ēzānā was the first Christian king of the country and Shai'azānā his brother was the first Christian prince. Now 'Abrehā and 'Aṣbehā cannot represent 'Ēzānā and Shai'azānā, and the two statements can only be reconciled by assuming either that 'Ēzānā and his brother took new names when they became Christians, or that 'Abrehā and 'Aṣbehā lived earlier or later than 'Ēzānā and his brother. Basset (*Études*, p. 220) explains the difficulty by saying that when Frumentius first went to Abyssinia 'Ella-'Alādā አሉ፡አላዳ፡ was king, and that when he returned, having been consecrated bishop of Aksūm by Athanasius, he found 'Abrehā and Aṣbehā in power, and became the first Patriarch of the Abyssinian Church with the title of Abbā Salāmā. 'Ēzānā in his inscriptions calls himself the son of 'Ella-'Amīdā, and it is possible that this name has been corrupted into 'Ella-'Alādā; if this be so 'Abrehā and 'Aṣbehā may be corruptions of 'Ēzānā and Shai'azānā.

Returning to the narrative of Rufinus it must be noted that the king of Abyssinia who summoned Frumentius to his court employed him not as a teacher of religion but as a keeper of his archives. Frumentius was the son or nephew of Meropius, and he and his brother Aedesius had, no doubt, enjoyed a liberal education, and had been in the habit of mixing with cultured men of affairs. From both the king would learn a great deal about the doings in the world outside Abyssinia, especially about the newly founded city of Constantinople, and the adoption of Christianity as the official religion by Constantine. The king would know that Christianity had taken deep root in Egypt, that the persecutions by the Roman governors, and the burnings and torturing carried

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

out by them had failed to stop its growth. And his converse with Frumentius would convince him that by adopting Christianity, and protecting Christian merchants, he would not only find favour with the Byzantine emperors, but assist the development of his country and native trade and commerce in the Red Sea generally. Though his raids were successful and made him a rich man, they added in no way to the general wealth of his country; on the other hand levies and taxes on rich caravans were very substantial benefits. The adoption of Christianity by 'Ēzānā was almost the inevitable result of its adoption by Constantine, but the influence of Frumentius hastened the king's decision.

The Church over which Frumentius presided when he returned to Abyssinia as bishop of Aksūm was very small, and it remained so for a century or more. It is quite a mistake to think that the Scriptures were translated into Gə'əz or Ethiopic by him for he had neither the means nor the helpers to carry out such a great and important task. In the second half of the 5th and in the 6th century a large number of monks found their way into Abyssinia, and they founded monasteries in many parts of Tigray. Among these were the famous "Nine Saints" who came from Egypt and Rome in, as the Chroniclers say, the reign of Al-Amədā, and whose names were:

Abbā Alēf አሌፍ፣ founder of the monastery of Beḥzā.

Abbā Şehma ጸሕግ፣ of Sedenyā.

Abbā Aragāwī አረጋዊ፣ with the title of Za-Mikāēl, founder of Dabra Dāmo in Tigray.

Abbā Afşē አፍሼ፣ founder of the monastery of Yahā, near Adwa.

Abbā Garīmā ገሪግ፣ founder of the monastery of Madara.

Abbā Panṭalēwōn ጽፕጠሎዎን፣

Abbā Liḳānos ሊቃኖስ፣ of Dabra Kuanāsel.

Abbā Gubā ጉባ፣ of Madara.

Abbā Yem'ātā ይምላታ፣ founder of a monastery at Gar'alta.

Each of these great ascetics is said to have built a monastery in the north of Abyssinia, and to have gathered about him a company of monks; one or two of the Nine Saints is said to have received the gift of working miracles. Guidi has shown (*Chiesa Abissinia*, p. 6) that though they came from Rūm, *i.e.* Constantinople, they were of Syrian origin, and it is to them that we must attribute the

## ABYSSINIA

Gē'ēz translation of the Bible, and to the introduction of certain important Syriac words in the Gē'ēz language, *e.g.* Haymānōt ሃይማኖት in Syriac Haymānūthā ܗܝܡܢܘܬܐ "faith, belief," and 'Ōrīt ኦሪት in Syriac ܐܘܪܝܬܐ Urāytā, the Law of Moses, the Tōrāh, *i.e.* the Pentateuch. The first Books chosen for translation were the Four Gospels, and the text from which they translated was of western Syrian origin and not that which was in use in Alexandria. And it seems that the Nine Saints and those who accompanied or followed them immediately, were Monophysites. At the Council of Ephesus in 431 the doctrines of Nestorius were rejected, and his followers fled and took refuge in the East, some of them taking asylum in India, China, and other remote countries. And in like manner the Monophysites who refused to accept the rulings of the Council of Chalcedon in 451, fled to the south, to Egypt, and thence to Nubia, and the regions of the Blue Nile and probably to some parts of Abyssinia. The doctrine of Eutyches which was enunciated at that Council was an abomination to them, and they retreated to regions where they could cultivate their own peculiar form of monophysitism.

During the 6th century, and most of the 7th the Abyssinian Church continued to prosper, and the monastic rule, which seems to have been based on that of Pachomius of Egypt, became highly developed. The ascetic literature written by the monks of Egypt was studied in the monasteries, and it is probable that portions of the "Paradise" of Palladius, or the "Garden of the Fathers," were translated into Gē'ēz. In spite of all this the greater number of the people, especially those to the south of Tigray and in the south-west, were pagans. The conquests of the Arabs gave new life to the pagan cults, and as their power increased that of Aksūm declined, and Christianity fell into disrepute. There was no recognized head to the Church, and those who professed the Christian religion mingled so many pagan practices and superstitions with their observances of its teachings that its essentials were forgotten and its characteristics lost. Under the influence of the all-conquering Arabs the cult of Judaism increased, and many people abandoned the Christian religion and all that it inculcated. Matters went from bad to worse, until in the first half of the 10th century Juditta,

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIIOPIANS

queen of Samēn, who is also known as Esthet, and "Saat," *i.e.* "Flame of Fire," seized the kingdom of Aksūm, massacred all the royal princes who were shut up in the fortress of Damo and made herself queen of Abyssinia. During her reign of 40 years she destroyed Aksūm and every trace of Christianity in it. Strange to say her successors, who came from Lāstā, and were kinsfolk of hers, were Christians, but their Christianity was of a very different kind from that of the early Aksūmite Christians. Thus the line of kings who traced their descent from Solomon and the Queen of Sheba was interrupted, and was not restored until about 300 years later, *i.e.* 1270.

In the second half of the 13th century a number of Coptic monks from Egypt came to Abyssinia, and having profited by the reform of the Coptic Church in Alexandria, they devoted themselves under the kings of the Solomonic line to the restoration of the decayed Church of Abyssinia. They brought with them Service Books, Books of Miracles of the Virgin Mary, the Canons of the Apostles, both in Arabic and Coptic, and from these made translations into Gē'ēz. And they translated the Books of the New Testament, and multiplied copies of them, and compiled books of ritual, which seem to have been wanting in the Abyssinian Church. The literary activity in the monasteries in the 13th and 14th centuries was great, but the monks found leisure to discuss abstruse theological problems, and out of these discussions heresies sometimes arose. Guidi (*Chiesa Abissinia*, p. 8) has enumerated some of them. Some denied the existence of Three Persons in the Trinity, others argued that man was not made in the image of God because God had no form, and others regarded the cult of the Virgin and the Cross as blasphemous. And many pagan practices were resuscitated by certain companies of monks, whilst others, especially monks of Kūshite origin, refused to relinquish the superstitions that they had held from their youth up. Most serious of all the heresies was that which was introduced by monks from Syria and Egypt, who taught that the body of Jesus Christ was not of the same nature as ours. For a time they made many converts, but at a Council presided over by the King Yemharana Krestōs they were condemned, and were driven out of the places where they lived and hotly persecuted. Apart from such troubles the Abyssinian Church,



THE TEMPTATION OF CHRIST IN THE DESERT THE DEVIL APPEARS TO HIM IN THE FORM OF AN ILL-FREELY FAVORED MAN, AND IS OFFERING A SIGN TO OUR LORD. BEHIND HIM STANDS THE SPIRIT OF SATAN IN THE FORM OF A MAN WITH WINGS, HORNS, TAIL AND CLAWS INSTEAD OF FEET.  
FROM BELL MUS. MS. CHENE. NO. 570.101.11



THE ANNUNCIATION THE ARCHANGEL GABRIEL APPEARS TO THE VIRGIN WHO HAS RISEN FROM HER PRAYER STOOL AND PRESENTS TO HER A LILY.  
FROM THE LADY MEX. "MIRACLES OF THE MEXICAN" (MS. NO. 3.101.81A)





## ABYSSINIA

as a whole, prospered for nearly a century, and the monks were so closely occupied with their work of translating Arabic texts, both sacred and profane, into Gē'ēz, and in editing and copying ecclesiastical writings generally, that they failed to read the signs of the times in the countries round about them.

Almost before they realized what troubles were before them Muhammad Giāñ, *i.e.* "Muhammad the Left-handed," invaded Abyssinia with hordes of Arabs (whom the early writers, *e.g.* Bruce, call "Moors") and began a long series of wars against the governors of provinces and towns, in which the Abyssinians generally suffered defeat. The churches were destroyed and burnt, all Christian books were defiled and burnt, and the monks and clergy slain offhand. Many Abyssinians, like the Nubian Christians of the Dongola kingdom and the Island of Meroë, apostatized and embraced Islam, but the Arabs were not satisfied and they continued to lay waste even the districts which they had conquered. Seeing that the total ruin of the country was imminent, the Abyssinians (*i.e.* the Queen Helena, the queen mother) entered into negotiations with the king of Portugal, who sent a body of Portuguese troops to assist them, and they were sufficiently grateful to wish to embrace the catholicism of Portugal, and to enter into friendship with the Pope. Lebna Dengel (1508-1540) sent a letter of submission to the Pope by the hands of Şagā za-Ab, who was accompanied by Peter de Covilham, the explorer of King John II of Portugal, and Claudius (1540-1559) sent a similar letter. In the reign of the latter the Jesuit Mission of 1546 arrived in Abyssinia, but they were not welcomed with enthusiasm, for Claudius and his followers were greatly attached to the doctrines and dogmas of the Church of Alexandria, which had become the centre of ultra-monophysitism. Claudius himself wrote pamphlets against the teaching of the Jesuits, and as Guidi points out (*op. cit.*, p. 9) aided and abetted the writing and copying of polemical treatises against the Catholics, *e.g.* the Şawana Nafs or "Asylum of the soul," the Fekkārē Malakōt or "Expositions of the Divinity," and the Hāymānōt Abau or "Faith of the Fathers." Through the agency of P. Pietro Paez, the King Susneos (Sissinius, 1607-1632) severed his connection with the Church of Alexandria, and in 1626 formally embraced Catholicism. This displeased the native

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

governing class and the priests so greatly that they by one means or another succeeded in making him abdicate in favour of his son Fāsīladas, who promptly restored the old connection between the Abyssinians and the Church of Alexandria. A violent persecution of the Jesuits then broke out, and they were hounded out of their monasteries and treated with the greatest cruelty and barbarity during the reigns of Fāsīladas and his successor John.

The danger of the invasion of the country by foreigners being overpast, and the Jesuits having been expelled, the monks again had leisure to continue their work on their religious literature, and to debate on the various theological speculations of both native and European origin. The great controversy about "Unction" and "Union" which was debated throughout all Abyssinia, divided the country in many parts into two great parties, viz. the followers of Takla Hāymānōt, and the followers of Eustathius. A clear exposition of the points under dispute will be found in Guidi, *Chiesa Abissinia*, p. 10 ff.

The Abyssinians regard the Bible as the first authority on questions of faith. Their canonical Books are those of the Canon of the Catholic Church and the orthodox Greek Church, and they include with these the Apocrypha, Tobit, Judith, Ecclesiasticus, etc., and the Book of Enoch, the Book of Jubilees, or "Kūfālā," the Pastor of Hermes, etc.; but they have not the Books of the Maccabees. They acknowledge the authority of the Councils of Nicaea (325), Constantinople (381) and Ephesus (431), but reject the rulings of the Council of Chalcedon (451). The Belief of the Abyssinians may be thus summarized: God is One and Triune, in three equal and separate Persons. The Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father only. The Word was made man for the redemption of the world. In the Incarnation, the human Nature was absorbed in the Divine, or disappeared, as some say, but others think that the human Nature was united to the Divine Nature in such a way that there remains only One Nature. The Virgin Mary is to be called the "Mother of God," and not the "Mother of Christ" as the Nestorians declare. She has a special cult, and the great King Zar'a Ya'qōb ordered that there should be in every church an altar dedicated to her.

The Abyssinians have inherited many of the beliefs of the old



1 JOHN THE BAPTIST WHO HOLDS A CROSS HEADED STAFF WITH A  
 2 OUR LORD STANDING IN THE JORDAN  
 3 THE HOLY GHOST DESCENDING IN A CLOUD OF LIGHT  
 4 OUR LORD GOING UP FROM THE JORDAN  
 11 MBBE MUS MS. LXXXV NO 510 FOL 1A



JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA AND NICODIMUS CARRYING THE BODY OF JESUS



## ABYSSINIA

Churches of the Syrians and Copts. They believe that God created every person and thing, both the visible and invisible, out of nothing. They have several orders of angels, Archangels, Thrones, Dominions, Principalities, Powers, etc., and their belief in guardian angels resembles somewhat that of the ancient Egyptians. Souls they think are transmitted into children from their begetters together with the body. The Sacraments are six in number. There are two kinds of baptism, viz. that effected by triple immersion, and that which commemorates the baptism of Christ in the Jordan. The sacramental bread is fermented and is in the form of small cakes stamped with a small cross. The priest breaks off the piece with the cross on it, dips it in wine and administers it to the suppliant. There is no stated time for making confession, but all the dying confess themselves to the priest; under the rule of the Jesuits no one made a confession before he was 25 years of age. Orders of the priesthood are conferred by the Metropolitan. Owing to the difficulty in obtaining the holy oil, the chrism has to all intents and purposes been given up. Marriages are celebrated in the presence of a priest, who recites the Lord's Prayer and blesses the couple and administers to them the Sacrament. The Abyssinians have practised circumcision from time immemorial, like the ancient Egyptians, and though it is regarded as a duty it has no religious significance.

The souls of the blessed do not on leaving their bodies go direct to the Paradise of God, but they abide in a place of peace and rest, where they await the general resurrection and the Last Judgment. The souls of the wicked have no abiding place in which to await the Last Judgment, but wander hither and thither distractedly. After the Last Judgment the souls of the blessed enter the Kingdom of God, and those of the wicked go to the place provided for them in hell. The belief in Purgatory is unknown, although prayers for the dead are in frequent use. The original forms of the Rituals for the Dead were translated from Coptic and Arabic in the 13th or 14th century, but the forms actually in use are not much older than the 17th century. At the canonical Hours the priest recites prayers and psalms, and the chanting of the liturgy is accompanied by the rattling of sistra, and the beating of time with the feet; after each section of the

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

Psalms the chanter improvises verselets called *kenē* ቀኔ: Many different forms of the anaphora of the sacramental service are known, and in some of them the prayer of consecration is somewhat different from that in use in the Catholic Church. Usually the consecration is followed by the prayer for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Fasts are many and are strictly observed, but no man fasts on Sundays and Sabbaths, and during the 50 days from Easter to Pentecost. The Abyssinians fast on the Wednesday and Friday of each week, and during the 40 days of Lent until the Sabbath of the Passion, which is preceded by the Fast of Heraclius and is followed by the great Fast of Holy Week, which extends from the Sabbath of the Passion to Easter. They observe also the Ninevah Fast (3 days in February), the Advent Fast (40 days), the Fast of the Apostles (15 days), which ends with the Festival of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, the Fast of the Assumption (15 days) in the first half of August, the Fast of *Ḳueskuām* (40 days) in October and November, and the vigils of Christmas and the Epiphany. In some Fasts a man fasts the whole day, in others only up to about 3 p.m. Festivals. The festivals of our Lord are: 1. His Incarnation; 2. His Passion; 3. His Resurrection; 4. *Bāla Tōmās*; 5. His Ascension; 6. The Day of the Paraclete; 7. His Transfiguration; 8. His Birth; 9. His Baptism (*Guidi*, *Vocabolario*, cols. 362, 363). The festivals of the Virgin Mary are: 1. Her Assumption; 2. Her Nativity; 3. Her Death; 4. Her appearance in Egypt (*Dabra Metmāḳ*); 5. *Dabra Ḳueskuām*; 6. Her Conception; 7. *Ṣēdanā*; 8. Her entry into the Temple; 9. The devotion of *Daksyōs*, a supposed Patriarch of Alexandria; 10. Her Covenant of Mercy; 11. The springing up of water caused by the Child; 12. The building of her Church; 13. The consecration of the same (*Guidi*, *Vocabolario*, col. 867). There are also many festivals celebrated in honour of the angels, and the saints whose lives are recorded in the *Ethiopic Synaxarium* or "Book of Saints." A list of the saints included in this work will be found in Ludolf's *Historia, Commentary*, p. 389.

The head of the Abyssinian Church is the Metropolitan, or *Abūn*, who is ordained by the Coptic Patriarch in Cairo. He is chosen from among the monks of one of the Coptic monasteries



MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL, THE "ANGEL OF THE  
FACE, HOLDING HIS DRAWN SWORD AND A CROSS  
FROM THE KOLI OF MAGICAL PRAYERS IN THE POSSESSION OF THE  
AUTHOR.







## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

all churches 1. The kenē māklilēt ቅዱሳንነታት or choir. 2. The Keddest ቅዱስት or place where the congregation receive the sacrament. 3. The makdas መቅደስ or sanctuary where stands the altar or place of the tābōt መንበረታት where the priests and the king receive the sacrament. The church stands on a raised platform with a sunk fence around it, and it has a thatched roof supported by stout columns. The woodwork of the porch is fine, and the blocks of wood are decorated with an elaborate Byzantine pattern. The drums and musical instruments were in the courtyard when Bent was there. The walls were decorated with many pictures; one of these is now in the British Museum. It is painted on a piece of silk canvas 7 feet long and 5 feet 8 inches wide. On it are depicted the Crucifixion, Christ being lowered into hell by a rope and Adam and Eve receiving His Body, and the skull of Adam which Shem and Melchizedek are said to have buried in Golgotha.

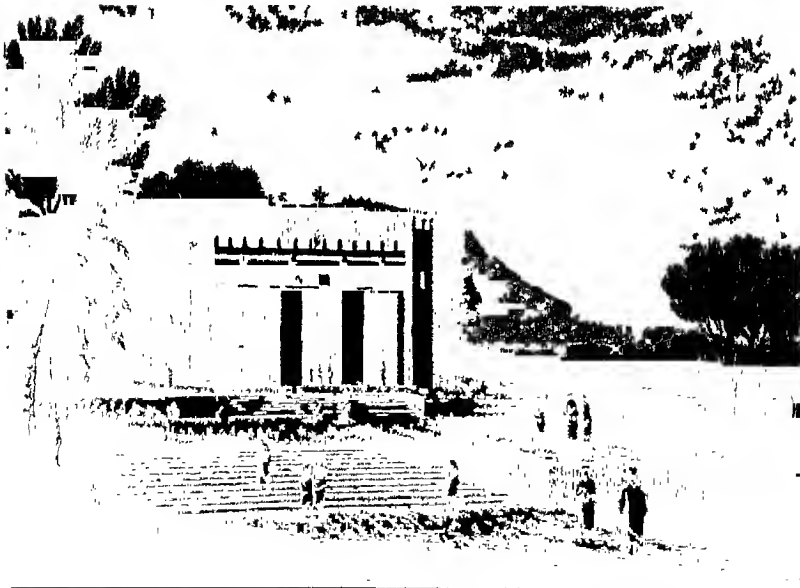
One of the oldest churches now remaining is that found in the massive building (fortress?) at Yeha, or Yaha, about 40 miles from Adua. It was at Yaha that the Ark of the Covenant which Menyelek I stole from Jerusalem rested for 40 years before it was carried into Aksūm, where according to Abyssinian tradition it now is. The church is rectangular and is about 61 feet long and 50 feet wide, it was probably about 50 feet in height. There is no trace of a window. On the west side was a doorway, and before it was a vestibule. In front of the vestibule stood two rough monoliths, and at the base of one was an altar. Outside the fortress is the modern church which was built out of the ruins of the older one.

The principal modern church in Abyssinia is that of St George, which has recently been built at Addis Ababa. It is octagonal in shape, is built of stone, and has a large central dome; see Rey, *Unconquered Abyssinia*, p. 132, and for a photograph of it see De Castro, *op. cit.*, plate XLV.

The first church built in Abyssinia is said to have been that of St Mary of Syon in Aksūm. Tradition says that it was built by Queen Candace after her conversion to Christianity by her eunuch, who had met St Philip and been baptized by him, and the Abyssinians say that they were, in consequence, the first Christians in the world. The eunuch was Candace's steward, and he lived in Gāza, a district which Solomon had given to



THE COPTIC CHURCH AT ADVA  
FROM THE DRAWING BY A. RALLIAS ( MASSIMI - FALIS 1892)



THE CHURCH OF AKSUM IT WAS BUILT BY PORTUGUESE ARCHITECTS AND STANDS ON THE SITE OF THE OLD CHURCH WHICH WAS DESTROYED BY MUHAMMAD GRAN. THE SIZE AND CHARACTER OF THE LOWERMOST FOUNDATION STONES SUGGEST THAT THE FIRST CHURCH WAS BUILT ON THE RUINS OF A VERY ANCIENT SUN TEMPLE. IT HAS A BRICK LOWER SURMOUNTED BY A CROSS AND A FLAT ROOF. THE ABOVE REPRODUCTION SHOWS THE CONDITION OF THE CHURCH WHEN LORD VALENZUELA VISITED IT IN THE EARLY YEARS OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.



## ABYSSINIA


Menyelek II, where he was the queen's treasurer and agent. The foundation stone of the church was sent to the queen by the apostles from Jerusalem. Alvarez says (Lord Stanley's *Narrative*, London, 1881, p. 81 ff.) that "it has five naves of a good width and of a great length, vaulted above, and all the vaults covered up, the ceiling and sides all painted. Below, the floor of the church is well worked with handsome cut stones. It has seven chapels, all with their backs to the east, and their altars well placed." It has a low choir, and the heads of the singers touch the vaulted roof. The large courtyard is paved, is uncovered, and is surrounded by a very high wall. The church has two enclosures, in the outer of which live two rectors of the church and canons and friars. Alvarez saw the ruins of the building in which the king's lions were kept, and before this great enclosure was "Pharaoh's fig-tree," which Mansfield Parkyns, who lived in Abyssinia for three years (1843-1846), describes as a sycamore, and says that the largest caravan could encamp under the shade cast by its wide-spreading branches. At each end of the court where the tree stood was a platform with 12 stone seats, that were said to have been made for Prester John's judges. Behind the church is a "handsome tank of masonry," and on it are chairs similar to those in the court before the enclosure.

Among other famous churches may be specially mentioned those of Tadbāba Māryām in Shoa, Aṭronsa Māryām in Amharā, Marṭula Māryām in Goggiam, the churches of Ḳueskuām, Nārgā and others built by Īyāsū II, the Church of the Nativity, and the Church of Takla Hāymānōt in Gondar. A list of the other churches in Gondar will be found in Guidi's *Vocabolario*, col. 758. The famous rock-hewn churches which were either made or finished by King Lālibalā at Lāstā are described in another section of this book.

The altar is usually covered with silk or brocade, or elaborately worked cloth, and on this, standing on a rectangular slab of wood or stone, rests the tābōt ታቦት, i.e. the wooden coffer which represents the Ark of the Covenant of the Hebrews, and the slab. This slab of wood is the holiest and most important object in the church, and some think that it is the modern equivalent of the altar-stone which the early Christians of Egypt inserted in their

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

altars. The Deity was supposed to be present in the stone, and the bread and wine were placed upon it; where there was no slab of stone the Eucharist could not be celebrated, and the same is the case to-day in Abyssinia. In ancient Egypt the Benu-stone was believed to be the dwelling place of the Sun-spirit or Sun-god, and it is possible that a reminiscence of the cult of the stone, or the stone worship, of their pagan ancestors was preserved unconsciously by the Egyptians when they adopted Christianity. The *tābōt* is now usually made of wood on which is cut a cross, more or less highly ornamented, enclosed in a rectangle; above it is carved Alpha and below it Omega. Above one corner of the rectangle is a small square with a floral design, and the whole is enclosed within a double ornamented border. Names of saints, e.g. Māryām and Michael, are often added, and sometimes the name of the donor of the *tābōt*; representative specimens are to be seen in the British Museum.

The sacramental vessels, the chalice ጥጥ፣ the paten ጸሀል፣ the pyx የኅብስኅ፣ ጥጥ፣, are usually made of silver, but occasionally of gold. Incense ሰጣን፣ is burnt in a bronze or copper censer ጥና፣ and holy water የጠበል፣ ሕቃ፣ is sprinkled with a kind of brush መርጫ፣ and the rosary መቀ፣ ጠሪያ፣ is used by many people. The officiating priest wears the long white garment common to the country, with a red stripe on it, and a white turban-like cap. He often holds in his hand a staff several feet long on which to lean መቋ፣ ሚያ፣ for there are no seats in the churches either for the clergy or the laity. The musicians beat drums, and clash small cymbals together, and the priest assists them by shaking a bronze instrument called ጸናጽል፣ in which series of circular metal disks are strung on fixed wires. The instrument has been borrowed by the Abyssinians from the Copts who in turn borrowed it from the ancient Egyptians, whose priests and priestesses rattled the sistrum  during the singing of hymns to the gods.

The Abyssinians have not admitted statues of saints or figures of our Lord into their churches, though painted pictures of the Patriarchs and of members of the Holy Family are found everywhere. Though the crucifix is rejected the cross is regarded

## ABYSSINIA

as a holy symbol, and miraculous powers are often attributed to it. In every church there is a cross in the sanctuary, and a cross is found on the top of the dome of every church. Large brass crosses, the sides of which are engraved with Scriptural scenes, are carried before processions, and episcopal crosses are regarded with great veneration. In many churches the shell of an ostrich egg is seen suspended from the roof, and shells of ostrich eggs are often seen attached to the points of the cross which surmounts the dome. The ancient Egyptians believed that one of the first acts of the Creator was to fashion the cosmic egg out of which came the Sun-god and this world and all that is in it. Whether the peoples of Western Asia borrowed the idea of hanging the shells of ostrich eggs in their sanctuaries from the Egyptians, or the Egyptians took the idea of the cosmic egg from some Asiatic people is a moot point. But as the shell of an ostrich egg with traces of linear decoration, now in the British Museum (No. 36377), was found among the objects in a predynastic grave it seems as if the Egyptians of the predynastic period also had some idea of the cosmic egg. I have seen shells of ostrich eggs suspended in churches and mosques in Egypt, Syria, Assyria and Babylonia, and they were always regarded as semi-sacred objects. The use of the shell of the ostrich egg in churches was probably borrowed by the Abyssinians from the Copts. A discussion on the ostrich egg in the Egyptian religion by E. Lefébure will be found in *Revue de l'histoire des Religions*, Paris, 1887, tome XVI. pp. 16-25. Parts of the shells of ostrich eggs were used by the Babylonians as medicine (Meissner, *Babylonien*, p. 309).

In recent times European bells have been introduced into Abyssinia, but the native bell is a short, thick plank of wood, or slab of stone, which is suspended from a pole and is struck by a stone or a piece of hard wood. Such bells were common in the monasteries in Egypt and Syria and Mesopotamia, and they were probably introduced into Abyssinia by the Coptic monks who went there in the 13th century.

Music written with notes is unknown in Abyssinia, but it seems fairly certain that many tunes, both sacred and profane, and the manner in which they are to be sung, have come down from ancient times. The church recognizes five great collections of hymns, viz. 1. The DEGGWA ደግዳ or hymn-book for the whole year. 2. The

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

ME'RĀF ምዕራፍ: a collection of hymns for festivals. 3. The MAWĀS'AT መዋሥዕት: or anthems for the whole year. 4. The EGZIABEIIĒR NAGS እግዚአብሔር፡ነግሥ: or hymns for the Saints' Days of the whole year. 5. The GŪBĀ'E MALKE' ጉበኤ:መልክኦ: a book of general hymns. In the manuscripts of these works in the British Museum (e.g. Add. 16195, Oriental 584) directions are given concerning the mode in which each hymn or anthem is to be sung, and over each line there are written very small letters of the Gě'ez alphabet which indicate the tone, the pause, the accent, etc. In some MSS. special directions are given as to the singing of Hallelujahs in connection with certain hymns; thus the Hallelujah to one hymn is to be sung in the mode Gě'ez ግዕዝ: the Hallelujah to another in the mode 'Arārāy አራራይ: and the Hallelujah to another in the mode 'Īzzēl ስንደ: The voice of the cantor, *Dabtarā* ደብተራ: is naturally rough and harsh, and his singing has been often described as ill-pleasing. The singing of the congregation is accompanied by pipes ስንደ: a harp መሰንፋ: cymbals, sistra and drums. Men and women alike clap their hands, stamp on the ground with their feet rhythmically, and make their bodies sway about; and on great festivals they dance and leap into the air, and sing throughout the night until the day breaks. Dancing is regarded as an act of worship, and children are made to learn dancing from their earliest years.

### THE ROCK-HEWN CHURCHES OF LĀLIBALĀ II (OR III?) IN THE COUNTRY OF AKSŪM

From first to last, from the days of Frumentius to the present time, the churches that have been built in Abyssinia may be reckoned by hundreds if not thousands, but nearly all of them have been destroyed during the wars which the chiefs of the country waged against each other, or by the Arabs led by Grāñ, the "Left-handed." Remains of the churches, etc. built by Father Pedro Paez are to be seen at Aksŭm and Gondar, but of ancient purely native architecture there is nothing to be seen anywhere. In spite of this Abyssinia contains the most remarkable churches in the world, and these are the group of rock-hewn churches at Lālibalā in Lāstā, which certainly deserve to be reckoned with the Seven Wonders of the world. All who have seen them marvel, not at their beauty, but at



## ABYSSINIA

the mind of the man who conceived their design, and the colossal labour which was expended in their making. The site chosen by the architect—whose name, alas, is unknown—is the nearly flat side of a spur of a mighty mountain composed of solid rock. In this flat side, or plateau, huge trenches with perpendicular sides have been sunk in the rock to a depth of 40 feet, and in some places even more. Some of these trenches cut through each other at right angles, leaving mighty rectangular blocks of living rock, with perpendicular sides, standing without any attachment to the mountain. These blocks have been hollowed out, pillars and windows have been cut, aisles have been made, and the result is that each block has become a church. The rock-hewn temples of Rameses II at Kalābshah and Abu Simbel cannot be compared with the churches at Lālībalā, because no attempt was made to alter the shape of the hills of sandstone out of which the temples were hewn, and to make the temples resemble independent buildings.

The first to describe the temples at Lālībalā was Father Francisco Alvarez (see Lord Stanley's *Translation*) who, having given many details about them, says: "It wearied me to write more of these works, because it seems to me that they will not believe me if I write more, and because as to what I have already written they may accuse me of untruth, therefore I swear by God, in Whose power I am, that all that is written is the truth, and there is much more than what I have written, and I have left it that they may not tax me with its being falsehood. And because no other Portuguese went to these works except myself, and I went twice to see them from what I had heard of them. This place is on the slope of the mountain, and from the peak of the mountain to this is a day and a half's journey of descent" (p. 130). The description of the churches at Lālībalā was summarized by Ludolf in his *Historia Æthiopica*, Frankfort, 1781, Bk. 2, chap. 5, §§ 10-12, who quotes a *salām* to Lālībalā from a native encomium on the king. But it seems that the writer had never seen the churches, for he speaks of them as being "built of dry stones without wet mortar," በአእባኑ ያቡስ፡አንበላ፡መሬት፡ርጠብ፡. It is quite clear that he did not know that each church was a monolith, and that no mortar at all was used. Other remarks on the churches by Ludolf will be found

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

in his *Commentarius*, p. 235. The existence of the churches was well known to Bruce though he does not say that he visited them: but he speaks of "large columns which are formed out of the solid rock, and every species of ornament preserved, that would have been executed in buildings of separate and detached stones, above ground" (*Travels*, Dublin, 1791, vol. III. p. 170). Henry Salt had full information about the churches, and assigned a date to them, which is probably correct (*Voyage*, tom. II. p. 48). No native Abyssinian writer has described these churches accurately, probably because of his lack of knowledge of architectural terms. The great Ethiopic History of Lālibalā which is found in a manuscript written before A.D. 1434 (see Brit. Mus. MS. Oriental No 719) says that they are copies of the models of monolithic churches which God showed to the king when he was snatched up into heaven. These were ten in number. Some had small doors and some large, and some had small interiors and some large; the walls of all were to be long and high, but some were to be higher than others. All the churches were similar in construction, but they had different colours, and in one church the walls were decorated with bas-reliefs, which were rarely admitted into Abyssinian churches.

A somewhat fuller description of the churches than that of Alvarez is that given by Rohlfs, in *Land und Volk in Africa*, Bremen, 1870, p. 143, but the first really good account of them was published by Achille Raffray in *Les Églises monolithes de la ville de Lalibala*, Paris, 1882. His work is illustrated by careful drawings of the monoliths themselves, and by sketches of their internal sculptures and decorations. From these it is possible to understand something of the character of the designs found in them, and the art which they represent, and to trace their connection with Byzantine originals which had been modified somewhat in Egypt. Raffray's work is a valuable contribution to the literature of the Lālibalā churches. Another very useful work is that of Simon, *L'Éthiopia, ses mœurs, ses traditions, les Églises monolithes de Lalibéla*, Paris, 1885. In this book we find plans of the churches as well as drawings of the sculptures, and on the narratives of Alvarez, Raffray, and Simon the following short descriptions of the churches are based. The photographs of the exteriors of some of the churches with their porches by Mr Harold Jones published by

## ABYSSINIA

Mrs R. Forbes, in *From Red Sea to Blue Nile*, London, 1925, facing p. 262 ff., are good and interesting, but all will regret that so expert a photographer did not manage to secure photographs of the interiors of the most important churches.

The ten churches of Lālibalā stand just outside a little town of that name, which lies in the middle of a group of ecclesiastical estates, and is governed by a monk. The town is off the beaten track and is visited chiefly by pilgrims who go to pray there, and to obtain a blessing, and by the sick and diseased who believe that the blessing of the saint will cause the water of the small stream which is there to work a cure on their bodies. It stands on the southern slope of Mount Abūna Yūsef, at an elevation of about 8000 feet, in 36° 45' 30" E. long., and 12° 5' 30" N. lat., and is about 80 miles due east of Lake Šānā. The churches form literally integral parts of the mountain, to which they are attached by their bases. The architect excavated a series of quarries in the mountain side, and in the middle of each he left standing an enormous block of living rock. The sides of the blocks were hewn and dressed to look like walls, and the inside was chiselled out, care being taken to make the pillars substantial and the arches deep enough to support the roof. Finally windows were cut in the sides to admit light and air. The ten or eleven churches, which are all oriented to the east, fall into two groups:

### Group I.

- 1 The Church of the Saviour of the World, Madḥanē 'Ālam.
- 2 The House of Mary, Bēta Māryām.
- 3 The House of the Cross, Bēta Maškał.
- 4 The House of the Virgins, Bēta Danāgel.
- 5 and 6 { The House of St Michael and Dabra Sina (Mount Sinai) Golgotha.

### Group II.

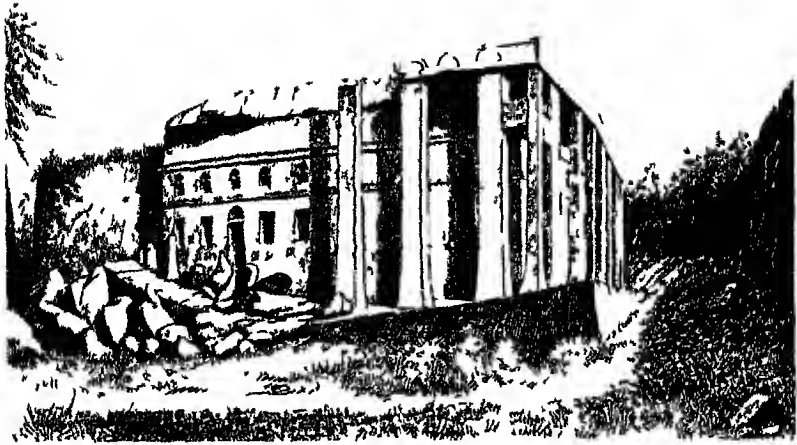
- 7 The House of Emmanuel, Bēta 'Ammanuēl.
- 8 The House of Mercurius, Bēta Marḳōrēwōs.
- 9 The House of Gabriel, Bēta Gabriēl.
- 10 The House of St George stands by itself.
- [11 The House of Abbā Mata'e, or Abbā Lībānōs.]

# ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

## I. THE CHURCH OF THE SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD

(Alvarez, p. 125)

This is the largest and best of the churches and is surrounded by a colonnade, before it is a platform which is approached by a flight of steps. Its principal entrance is on the west side. Its external dimensions are: length 33.50 metres, breadth 23.50 metres, internal dimensions, length 26 metres, breadth 19.50 metres. The greatest thickness of the walls is 2.08 metres. The church stands in an excavation 43 metres long, 38 metres broad, and 10 metres deep. The church has five naves and eight transepts or bays, which are formed by rectangular pillars, with capitals united by deep arches. At the end of each transept is a window in the upper part of which are 10 small circular openings, between which are four stairs; above them is a series of cross-shaped and star-shaped openings, which were originally filled with coloured glass. The first transept is separated from the rest of the church by a wall, and forms a kind of vestibule; the seventh and eighth transepts are joined by a wall, and form the choir of the church. In each corner of the east end of the church is a small chamber which served as a sacristy: the sanctuary is approached by a flight of steps. On the left of the central nave, outside the sanctuary, are the tombs of Sidi Maskal, the master builder (architect?) and two of his companions, and close by, standing by a pillar, is the stone on which our Lord Himself is supposed to have baptized Lalibalā. Alvarez adds the following details: The vaulted roofs are very well worked and of great height. The keystones are decorated with much tracery. The windows are long and narrow in the middle, with much tracery, and they are splayed. The canopy over the altar of the principal chapel is very high, with a support at each corner. The chapels in the other naves have no canopies. The principal door has at each side many and large buttresses, and the door commences with very large arches, and goes on narrowing with other arches until they reach a small door, which is not more than nine spans high and four and a half wide. The side doors are in this manner, only that they do not commence with so much width, and they end with the width of the principal door. On the outside part of the church are seven buttresses with arches, which are 12 palms distant from the



INTERIOR OF THE MONOTHIC CHURCH DEDICATED TO THE SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD

PLATE I. PART OF THE TEMPLE



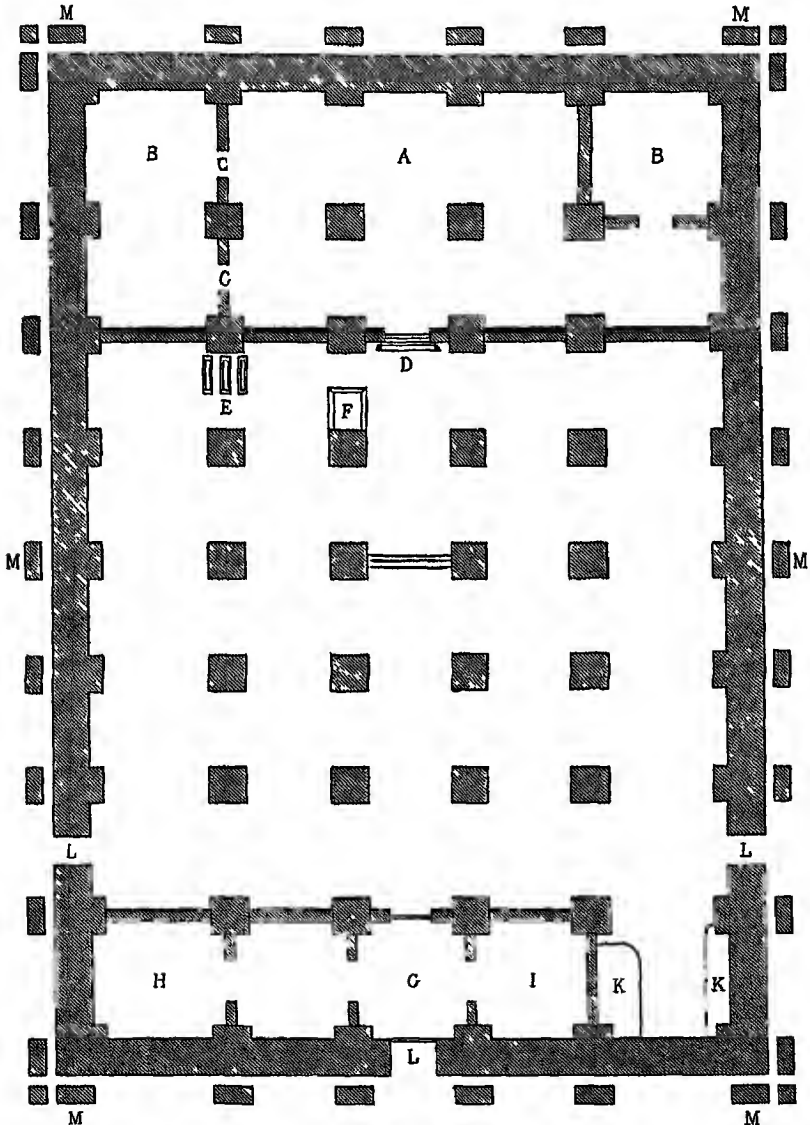
INTERIOR OF THE MONOTHIC CHURCH DEDICATED TO THE LORD IMMANUEL

PLATE II. PART OF THE TEMPLE



## ABYSSINIA

wall of the church, and from buttress to buttress an arch, and above the church, on those arches, a vault constructed in such manner



Plan of the Monolithic Church dedicated to the Saviour of the World (Madhanē 'Ālam) in the town of Lalibalā. From A. Raffray, *Églises monolithes*, Paris, 1882, Plate 3.

that if it were built of pieces and soft stone it could not be straighter nor better constructed, nor with more work about it.

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

These arches outside may be about the height of two lances. The entrance to this church is by a descent through the rock itself, 80 steps cut artificially in the stone, of a width that 10 men can go side by side, and of the height of a lance or more. This entrance has four holes above, which give light to the passage above the edges.

### 2. THE CHURCH OF OUR LADY MARY (Alvarez, p. 126)

This church is approached by a passage from the court of the Church of the Saviour of the World. Its court is irregular in shape; the north and south sides are 36 metres in length, the east side is 37.50 metres, and the west side 21 metres. The church is rectangular, 15 metres long and 11 metres broad. It has three doors which face north, south and east respectively, and three naves and three transepts. In this church only is a semi-circular gallery or tribune which has been hewn in the outer face of the wall and runs round the church. Tradition says that Lālibalā sat here and watched the progress of the services through the openings cut in the wall. All the arches and capitals are carved and painted, several pillars are decorated with sculptures, and on the ceilings are frescoes. The window openings are of unusual form and are much decorated. Alvarez adds that the church has six buttresses on the exterior, with canopies over the arches. In front of the main door is a large house in which bread is distributed to the poor.

### 3. THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY CROSS (Alvarez, p. 128)

This church lies a little to the north of the Church of Mary, and it is practically a cave hewn in the mountain. It is 19 metres long and 7 metres broad, has no naves, but has three columns in the middle. It has two doors, the principal one of which is "well wrought"; the other, on one side, according to Alvarez, is very handsome. It has no court and does not face outwards, but "only to a corridor like a path, which goes outside, underneath the rock, very long and very dark."

### 4. THE CHURCH OF THE VIRGINS

This church lies to the south of the Church of Mary, and is practically a cave hewn in the mountain; it is 5 metres long and



## ABYSSINIA

5 metres broad. The most interesting feature in it is the dome above the altar. In the open space near are three baptisteries; one of these is square in form, and the other two have the form of Greek crosses.

### 5 and 6. THE CHURCH OF GOLGOTHA AND ST MICHAEL (Alvarez, p. 122)

This church is not completely separated from the mountain, and the level on which it stands is 6 metres below that of the Church of Mary, and 10.50 metres below the level of the rock. The west side of the church is 25 metres, and the south and east sides are 11 metres and 7.50 metres long respectively. The church contains two distinct churches, that of St Michael being on the south, and that of Golgotha on the north. Each transept terminates at each end in a niche in which is the figure of a saint larger than life size. In one of these niches, before which is an iron grating, is a figure of Christ with His Head resting on a Greek cross, and His Arms crossed on the breast. This niche symbolizes the tomb of Christ. In this church is a sort of cell, now sealed up, in which tradition says Lālībalā was buried. In the corner, nearly facing Golgotha, is the chapel of Adrio, which is abandoned. Alvarez says that the ceiling of this church rests on five supports, two on each side and one in the centre, like fives of dice, and the ceiling or roof is all flat, like the floor of the church. The sides also are worked in a fine fashion, also the windows, and the doors with all the tracery, which could be told, so that neither a jeweller in silver, nor a worker in wax, could do more work. The tomb of this king (*i.e.* Lālībalā) is in the same manner as that of Santiago of Galicia, at Compostella, and it is in this manner: the gallery which goes round the church is like a cloister, and lower than the body of the church, and one goes down from the church to this gallery. There are three windows on each side, that is to say, at that height which the church is higher than the gallery, and as much as the body of the church extends, so much is excavated below, and to as much depth as there is height above the floor of the church. And if one looks through each of these windows which is opposite the sun, one sees the tomb at the right of the high altar. In the centre of the body of the church is the sign of a door, like a trap door, it is

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

covered up with a large stone, like an altar-stone, fitting very exactly in that door. They say that this is the entrance to the lower chamber, and that no man enters there, nor does it appear that the stone or door can be raised. This stone has a hole in the centre which pierces it through, its size is three palms [= 12 inches]. All the pilgrims put their hands into this stone (which hardly find room), and say that many miracles are done here. On the left-hand side, where one goes from the principal door before the principal chapel, there is a tomb cut in the same rock as the church, which they say is made after the manner of the sepulchre of Christ in Jerusalem. So they hold it in honour and veneration and reverence as becomes the memory to which it belongs. In the other part of the church are two great images carved in the wall itself, which remain in a manner separated from it. One of the images is of St Peter, the other of St John: they give them great reverence.

This church also possesses a separate chapel, almost a church; this has naves on six supports, that is, three on each side. This is very well constructed, with much elegance: the middle nave is raised and arched, its windows and doorways are well wrought, that is, the principal door and one side door, for the other gives entrance to the principal church. This chapel is as broad as it is long, that is 52 spans broad, and as many in length. It has another chapel, very high and small, like a pinnacle, with many windows in the same height: these are 12 spans long and 12 wide. This church and its chapels have their altars and canopies, with their supports, made of the rock itself, it has also a very great circuit cut out of the rock. The circuit is on the same level as the church itself, and is all square, and its walls are pierced with holes the size of the mouth of a barrel. All these holes are stopped up with small stones, and they say that they are tombs, and such they appear to be, because some have been stopped up since a long time, others recently. The entrance of this circuit is below the rock, at a great depth and measure of 13 spans, all artificially excavated, or worked with the pickaxe, for here there is no digging because the stone is hard.

All the five churches described above are connected with each other, and with the second group of churches, by subterranean passages.



BAS RELIEF IN THE MONOLITHIC CHURCH DEDICATED TO SAINT  
MICHAEL AND GOLGOTHA  
FROM A RELIEF, OF GIP, HAIL 7



## ABYSSINIA

### 7. THE CHURCH OF EMMANUEL (Alvarez, p. 128)

This church stands in an excavation 30 metres long, 50 metres broad, and 11·50 metres deep; the church itself is 17·50 metres long and 11·50 metres broad. The exterior is handsome, and the beauty of its appearance is greatly enhanced by its sub-base or plinth, which has steps. Alvarez says that it has three naves, the middle one high and vaulted; the side naves are unvaulted. The naves rest on five supports, four spans square, and the wall of the church, has four more. All the doors are well worked and of the same size. On the outside is a space (plinth?) of three steps, which go all round it, except at the doors, each of which has a wide space and five additional steps. This church has a choir, to which access is gained by a spiral staircase; no other church has a choir. The choir is low and has a flat ceiling, and in it are doorways which lead into little rooms or cells; the chests of vestments and church ornaments are stored in the choir, which is used for no other purpose. The chests must have been made in the choir. The outside walls of the church have tiers of walls, which bend inwards and outwards alternately. This wall is 52 spans high, and has the appearance of a town wall; in it are three good doors like the small gates of a walled town.

### 8. THE CHURCH OF MERCURIUS

The Church of Mercurius is in reality a cave cut in the rock, 31 metres long, 25 metres broad, and from 6 to 8 metres high. The walls are decorated with frescoes representing the equestrian saints George and Mercurius, and the Virgin and Child.

### 9. THE CHURCH OF ST GABRIEL

This church is 19·50 metres long, and 17·50 metres in its greatest breadth. The southern court is 9 metres deep, and the northern court, which is before the façade, is 15 metres deep. Each of its two doors opens on a platform, which seems to be a copy of the praetorium at Jerusalem. In the façade are five large niches, *en ogive*, separated from each other by a pilaster. There is a door in each of the niches at the end, and in each of the three intermediate niches there is an ogival window, with a capital. A subterranean passage runs parallel with the bed of the stream, which

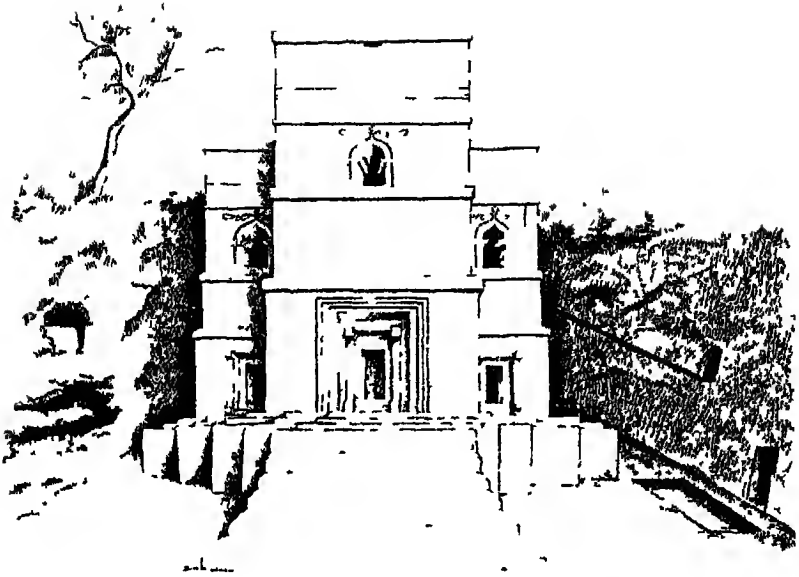
## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

the monks have called "Jordan," extends towards the south, and at the point where the passage and the bed of the river meet is a large monolithic cross. Raffray thinks that the cross marks the spot in the mountain opposite where the subterranean passage leading to the Church of St George began.

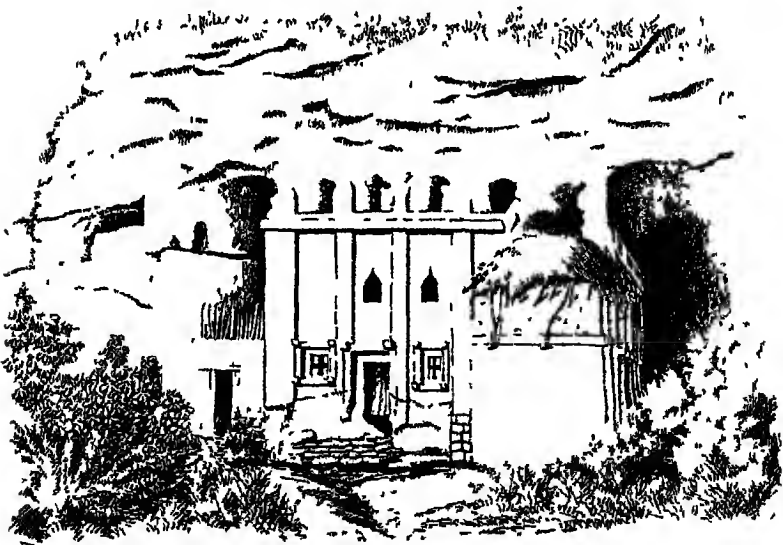
### 10. THE CHURCH OF ST GEORGE (Alvarez, p. 129)

This church is in the form of a Greek cross, and it stands in the centre of a rectangular courtyard which is 23 metres long, 22 metres broad and 12 metres deep. The church is practically a square edifice, its length being 12.50 metres and its greatest breadth 11.90 metres. It stands on a sub-plinth or pedestal and the seven steps, and the moulding upon it make it appear to have been built in stages. It has three doors, and an ogival window, with well-carved ornamentations. The entrance is under the rock, and at the top of the flight of steps is a house, with benches running along its sides, where the poor assemble and receive alms. On the west side is a crypt in which the dead are burned. According to Simon (*op. cit.*, p. 303) the dead are rolled up in the tanned hide of a bull, which is laced up with thongs, and being placed in the crypt became dry and so are preserved. The body of every native of the town of Lalibalā who dies when away from home is brought back and buried in this crypt. A little further along are the chambers in which the officials of the church keep the musical instruments and other properties, and between the crypt and these chambers is the passage leading to the subterranean passage that runs parallel with the stream "Jordan," and serves as a means of communication with the other churches. On the left, in the open gallery, are six rough steps which are known as the "Ladder of Lalibalā." Tradition says that the king rode his horse down them into the courtyard, but there is no record that any man has tried to emulate his amazing feat of horsemanship. Close to the church are two baptisteries which are supplied with water from the stream "Jordan."

A number of details about the preparations which Lalibalā made for building these ten churches are given in the History of Lalibalā in the British Museum (see Perruchon's *Vie de Lalibala*, Paris, 1892), and from this we learn that it was in answer to a direct



INTERIOR OF THE MONOLITHIC CHURCH DEDICATED TO ST. GEORGE  
FROM A PAPER BY G. DE LUZI (9)



EXTERIOR OF THE MONOLITHIC CHURCH DEDICATED TO ABBĀ LĪBĀNŌS  
FROM A. PAFRAS, OP. CIT., II, PL. 17





## ABYSSINIA

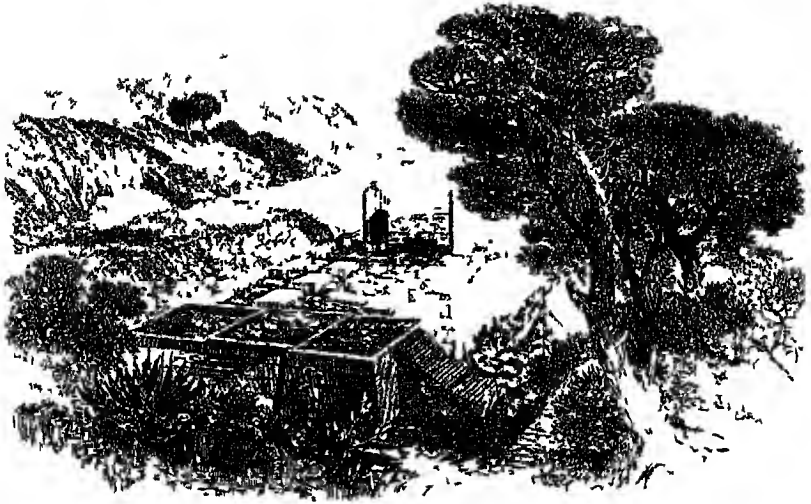
command from God that he began the work. He scoured the country to find tools for working in stone, picks, chisels, scrapers, dressers, etc., and then he collected workmen. He made each man tell him what wages would satisfy him, and the king gave them what they asked. Hewers, dressers, and labourers worked without interruption from the beginning to the end of the work. Angels from heaven assisted him in planning the churches and in fixing the dimensions of each church, and though as king he might have taken without payment the grounds necessary for his church, he paid the owners of the properties the sums they named as their price in gold. Angels took an active part in the construction of the churches, and they worked side by side with the men as hewers, dressers, carriers, etc., during the day, but by night they worked by themselves, and did twice as much as was done during the day. The Abyssinian scribe, after stating that no such churches have ever been built in any other country, goes on to say, "What tongue is capable of giving a description of them? I cannot explain to you the construction of their walls, and do not expect me to describe the interiors of the churches for I cannot. He who beholds them will never be able to gaze his fill, and his marvelling at them is so great that his heart is never tired in admiring them."

Modern travellers who have visited the churches disagree as regards the period when they were hewn; some think they are the work of the 5th century of our era, and others, judging from the decoration of the windows and the sculptured designs on the walls, attribute them to the 11th century, and the latter date is probably correct. The monks told Alvarez (p. 130) that all the churches were hewn in 24 years, and that they were the work of "Gibetas," which he explains by "white men," *i.e.* foreigners from the north whose complexions were, when compared with those of the natives, "white." There can be no doubt that by "Gibetas" we are to understand Egyptians, *i.e.* Copts, who were, as the remains of their churches in Egypt and the Sūdān testify, skilled architects and builders. They were well acquainted with the subterranean tombs and the rock-hewn maṣṭabah tombs of their predecessors the ancient Egyptians, and the rock-hewn temples of Rameses II at Kalābshah and Abu Simbel. There is nothing left of their works which indicates that they had grasped the idea of a monolithic

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

temple, or tomb, but there is no reason why the idea should not have been suggested to them by the great monolithic shrines which still exist in some of the temples of Egypt. But the conception of the monolithic church, whether it originated with the Copts, or with Lālībalā, or with his clerk of the works Sīdī Maṣkal, is very remarkable. For no Pharaoh, so far as is known, ever cut out of a mountain a monolith which, when all the waste was cut away from the top and sides, was sufficiently large to be hewn into a temple 110 feet long, 76 feet broad, and 33 feet high. The drawings and plans published by Raffray and Simon suggest that the mind of the master of the work was influenced by Egyptian and Byzantine architectural models, and that he was well acquainted with the details of the monasteries and churches erected by the Copts in Egypt during the 9th-11th centuries, and with Byzantine buildings in Jerusalem and other places in Palestine. The History of Lālībalā tells us that the king made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem after his marriage, and that he visited all the holy places. There he would see specimens of Byzantine architecture, and one tradition says that he brought 500 workmen from Jerusalem and Alexandria to his city.

The stone out of which the churches are hewn is a reddish, coarse-grained sandstone, and, according to Raffray, the tool chiefly employed in their construction was the pick. On no part of the work is found the smooth surface which is produced by the fine chisel. The unit of measurement seems to have been the *pik* (= 29.53 inches), and the cubit. Simon thinks that the hewing out of the churches occupied 200 years (not 24, as the monks told Alvarez), that some of them were begun in the 5th century, by Byzantine builders, and finished by Muslims in the 7th or 8th centuries, and that Lālībalā only finished in the 11th century what others had begun in the 5th century. These views, it seems to me, cannot be substantiated. The important point to consider in connection with the ten churches is whether they are of native or foreign origin, and all the evidence available seems to me to indicate that the conception and planning and execution of the work is due to foreigners. As many as two hundred monolithic churches were known to Raffray, but all of them, even those of Sokota and Balbalā-Gīwōrgīs, were poorly executed, and were merely copies of those of Lālībalā.



IAAKHA MĀRVĀM AS SEEN FROM THE HIGHER GROUND



## ABYSSINIA

For an account of the reign of Lālībalā see the Historical Section.

### II. THE CHURCH OF ABBĀ LĪBĀNŌS

This church is 9 metres long, 7 metres broad, and stands in a court 12 metres deep; it is attached to the mountain by its roof and base. A circular tunnel, 7 metres high, surrounds it and thus every part of it can be examined. The façade is decorated with four flat pilasters, and in the centre is a door, on each side of which is a window in the form of a Greek cross. Above the door and window on the right are two windows *en ogive*, and higher up still, above a cornice, are four openings with semi-circular tops. This church is said to have been built by Maṣṣal Kebra, Lālībalā's queen, in memory of her husband. On one of the walls inside is a painting in which the king is seen standing between Maṣṣal Gabra and Abbā Lībānōs; it is in a poor state of preservation, and the outlines of the king's face and figure have been strengthened with charcoal by a modern hand. If their tradition about the builder of this church be correct, Lālībalā's churches are ten in number, and not eleven as many have said.

## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

ABOUT the country of Abyssinia and its history no exact information existed in Europe until the close of the 15th century of our era. The fabulous accounts of Ethiopia (Abyssinia) which were written by classical historians and geographers were for centuries regarded as historical in character, and men were content to believe that "aegyptians, and satyrs," and men with eyes in their breasts were among its inhabitants. And it was thought to be the home of bulls that lived entirely on human flesh, and of monster serpents and dragons that fed daily upon men's first born daughters, and great quantities of milk, and of composite monsters with winged bird-headed animal-bodies, and the claws of beasts of prey and tails that were living serpents. The country was a mystery, and, more remarkable still, it was believed to be ruled over by a Christian potentate who was commonly known as "Prester John." The historical original of this personage has been said to be "John, the Patriarch of the Indians," who visited Rome during the pontificate of Calixtus II, in the first quarter of the 12th century. He told many stories of the miracles wrought among the Christians of Malabar in India at the tomb of St Thomas, who was the first to convert the Indians to Christianity. Before the end of the 12th century popular rumour raised this Patriarch of the Indians to the rank of king, and attributed to him great and glorious conquests, and conferred upon him supernatural spiritual powers. The early geographers had always regarded Ethiopia as the western part of the great empire of India, and early in the 13th century, if not earlier, it was believed that Prester John's kingdom was Ethiopia, including Abyssinia. This was probably due to the letter which the Emperor Manuel received from "Presbyter Ioannes" in the second half of the 12th century, and which has been critically discussed and examined by Zarncke in his *Der Priester Johannes*, Leipzig, 1876-79. In this letter the Presbyter" says he was king of 72 kings, and that he lived in a palace the model for which was provided by Thomas the Apostle.

## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

He was waited on by kings in relays of seven, 12 archbishops and 20 bishops sat about him, and 60 dukes and counts by the hundred ministered to his wants. His country produced gold and precious stones, spices and aromatic gums, and in it, among countless other wonders, was the well of the water of life which bestowed eternal youth on all those who bathed in it. The "Presbyter," who was proud to confess that he owed his kingdom to the might of God and the Lord Jesus Christ, stated that his one desire in life was to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and to employ his cavalry, 10,000 strong, and his army of 100,000 men in fighting the enemies of the Cross. By the middle of the 14th century Prester John's kingdom had been definitely transferred to Ethiopia, and we hear no more of him as king of China, India, or Tartary. See Oppert, *Der Presbyter Johannes in Sage und Geschichte*, Berlin, 1870; and Yule, *Ser Marco Polo*, 2nd ed. (Index).

It has been said that the title "Prester (or Presbyter) John" was first applied to the king of Abyssinia, but this is exceedingly unlikely. There was, in my opinion, an older historical original of "Prester John" than "John, Patriarch of the Indians" mentioned above. There were Christian kings ruling in Abyssinia in the 4th century of our era, and their successors were Christians until the 10th century, when the Zāgwē overthrew their dynasty. Anyone of these might have had a title which was misunderstood and translated "Presbyter" by foreigners, and John could quite well have been one of this king's names. Whether this be so or not cannot be said, but assuredly the history of Prester John must be based on some historical facts, which at one time were so well known as not to be thought worth recording, or were forgotten.

Among the many in Europe in the second half of the 15th century who were eager to know something definite about Prester John was John II, king of Portugal, and he selected as his envoy to Abyssinia Peres João Covilham, an able and energetic officer who had made treaties with the Moors which were very advantageous to the Portuguese. Covilham was born at Covilhao about the middle of the 15th century, and died after 1545. On setting out for the East in search of the "Ogani" or Prester John he took with him Alphonse de Payva, a man possessing great commercial knowledge. They joined a caravan at Fez and went to Tor in the

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

Peninsula of Sinai, and thence to Aden, where they separated. Covilham explored the seas of India and collected a vast amount of information which he sent back to the king of Portugal by the hands of two Jews, and a map showing that it was possible to sail to India by way of the Cape of Good Hope. Meanwhile A. de Payva went to Sofala and examined the gold mines, but was murdered at some place in southern Abyssinia. When Covilham returned to Camo and heard of the murder of de Payva, he abandoned his project of returning to Portugal and went to Abyssinia instead. The king received him with great kindness, and found his knowledge and advice so useful to him that he would not let him return to Europe. He married and settled down in Abyssinia, but though he obtained great power and influence there among all classes, there was one thing which he could not do, *i.e.* leave the country. He lived in Abyssinia for thirty-three years, and was alive, though a very old man, in 1545. It is sad to relate that he left no written narrative of his residence in Abyssinia.

The first European to give any account of Abyssinia based on first-hand knowledge was Francisco Alvarez, who was born at Coimbra towards the end of the 15th century, he was appointed chaplain to the Mission which the king of Portugal sent to Abyssinia under the direction of Rodriguez da Lima, and chronicled the adventures of his party from 1520 to 1527, when he returned to Portugal. He published his work at Coimbra (?) in 1542 under the title *Verdadera Informaçam das terras de Preste Joam*, and translations of it have appeared in Italian (1550 and 1554), French (1556), Spanish (1557), German (1566), and English (see *Purchas, his Pilgrimes*, Pt. II. 1625; and Lord Stanley, 1881). Another valuable work of the same kind as that of Alvarez appeared soon after (1565), namely the account of Abyssinia written by John Bermudes, who had been appointed Patriarch of Abyssinia by Paul III. He lived in Abyssinia for more than 30 years, and died at Lisbon in 1570. Ludolf praises the narratives of both Alvarez and Bermudes, because both had lived in Abyssinia, but he warns his readers to choose their descriptions of what they saw to their reports of things heard from others (*modò praeferas da, quae ipsi viderunt, illis quae ex aliis audiverunt*). Other accounts of Abyssinia appeared in the latter half of the 16th century, viz.





ABBA GREGORIUS, THE ABYSSINIAN, THE FRIEND AND TEACHER OF  
LUDWIG



## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

those by Ludovicus Ureta and Jacobo Barrati, the former of whom has been shown by Ludolf, Godinho, and Thévenot to be "nugator insignis," as Ludolf calls him, and the latter a man who described things rather as he wished them to be than as they were.

The writers of these works were too much occupied with their duties as Jesuit priests to be able to give much time to the study of the ancient history of the country, the inhabitants of which they were trying to convert to Christianity, and it seems that the first attempt to write a "History of Abyssinia" was made by the Jesuit priest Baltazar Tellez, who was born in 1595 and died in 1675. His work, *Historia geral de Ethiopia a alta ov Preste Joam e do que nella obraram os Padres da Companhia de Jesus: composta na mesma Ethiopia pelo Padre Manoel d'Almeyda. Abreviada com nova releyçam e methodo pelo Padre Balthezar Tellez*, Coimbra, 1660, was welcomed by scholars in Europe with the greatest enthusiasm, for it was based upon the writings and reports of many learned Jesuit Fathers, all of whom had lived in Abyssinia and possessed first-hand information. An abridgment of this work was published in English under the title of *Travels of the Jesuits in Ethiopia* by Kaapton in 1711, and Thévenot published a long extract from it in *Histoire de la haute Éthiopie écrite sur les lieux par le R. P. Manoel D'Almeida, Jésuite*, in 1672. The principal source of information drawn upon by Tellez was the *History of Abyssinia* which was compiled by Manoel D'Almeyda (1580-1646), a Jesuit missionary who laboured in Abyssinia from 1622-1632. The abridgment published by Tellez shows that D'Almeyda's *History* was a large and important work, and that the historical portions of it were based upon documents which have now disappeared, and traditional information which is no longer available for study. Unfortunately, too, the abridgment of Tellez is a very scarce book, and Salt says (*Travels*, p. 481) that he only knew of three copies in England. D'Almeyda's *History* was never printed, and it seems to be lost. Ludolf attached the greatest importance to the abridgment of it by Tellez, and it was his chief authority for his statements about the history of Abyssinia. He complains, it is true, that Tellez extols too much the acts and works of the Jesuit Fathers, and that his criticisms of the Abyssinian ceremonies are too sharp, but he recognizes his "candour and sincerity" and, on the whole, goodwill

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

towards the natives. For Ludolf's criticisms of Tellez see his *Commentarius*, p. 9 f. As to the justness of his criticisms of the Jesuit Fathers and their works in Abyssinia, neither the present writer nor anyone else can decide, but that they are ungenerous is obvious. The Jesuit Missionaries in Abyssinia fared hard and worked hard, but their devotion to their high ideals and their love of learning made them triumph over their difficulties in a remarkable manner, and all that we know of Abyssinia from about 1480 to 1630 we owe to their Society, and our debt to them is great. The Jesuits helped the Abyssinians to reconstruct their kingdom, Church, and social life after the calamities and ruin which had been brought upon them by the Arabs under Grāñ, the "Left-handed," and by the civilizing and religious influences which they introduced into Abyssinia, and their encouragement of native literature, they made the peoples of that country their debtors for all time. The Jesuits went to Abyssinia solely with the view of improving the spiritual condition of her people, and their bitterest enemies cannot show that they sought for concessions or any commercial or material advantage at the hands of "Prester John" or any of his princes and governors. The saving of souls was their one unalterable object, and the hardships, sufferings, persecutions, and martyrdom which they endured is undeniable evidence of their sincerity and their devotion to their work.

The man who is to be justly regarded as the founder of Ethiopic studies in Europe is Hiob Ludolf, who was born at Erfurt on the 15th of June 1624 and died in April 1704. He was a man of great learning and was credited with a knowledge of 25 languages. He seems to have gained a living by acting as tutor and as a teacher of languages. In 1649 he went to Rome to collect information for a patron, and whilst there (according to the statement which he makes in the Proemium to his *Hist Aeth.*, I. 17) he made the acquaintance of one Gregory, an Abyssinian, with whom he contracted a great friendship. This Gregory was a grave and learned man, and was more than 50 years of age, and was moreover an exile, because he had gone to India against the wish of the king. From him Ludolf says that he learned Ethiopic, and that through his teaching he had attained greater knowledge of that language than any of his predecessors; Tellez himself had no



IOB LUDOLF, THE FATHER OF ETHIOPIC STUDIES IN EUROPE



## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

knowledge of Ethiopic. Ludolf was made a Councillor by the Duke of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, and apparently soon after began to collect material for his great work *Historia Aethiopica sive brevis et succinta descriptio Regni Habessinorum quod vulgò malè Presbyteri Iohannis vocatur*, Frankfort, 1681. A commentary on this work appeared in 1691 and Appendices in 1694. He published an Ethiopic Grammar in 1661, an Amharic Grammar in 1698, and an Ethiopic-Latin Lexicon in 1699. He died in 1704. His *Hist. Aeth.* was translated into English (1682), French (1684), and Dutch; on the proposed Russian version see Ludolf's Commentary, pp. 47, 48. For some reason Willmann doubted the existence of the great friendship which Ludolf says existed between him and Gregory, but the Amharic letter which is printed with a Latin translation on p. 35 of the Commentary shows at least that Gregory sorrowed much over his separation from Ludolf. Gregory is often referred to and quoted in the *Hist. Aeth.*, and it seems improbable that the friendship to which Ludolf refers was wholly fictitious. Ludolf's Ethiopian History was warmly welcomed throughout Europe, and was everywhere read and studied with great interest, and that interest was increased when the learned Commentary appeared. The sources on which the work was based were the abridgment of Almeyda's *History*, made by Tellez, a Commentary of Almeyda written in Ethiopia, the manuscript *History of Ethiopia* by Dom Alfonso Mendez, the Latin Patriarch of Ethiopia, who arrived in the country in 1625, and a French translation of a work by Mendez, made by B. Cordose and entitled *Relation du Reverendissime Patriarche d'Ethiopie Dom Alphonse Mendez touchant la conversion des âmes qui s'est faite en cet Empire depuis l'année 1629. Envoyé au Père Viteleschi*, etc. Traduit du Portugais, Lille 1633.

For about two centuries Ludolf's *History* has been the source from which travellers and the writers of articles on Ethiopia for Encyclopaedias have drawn their information, for the value of Bruce's work has been sadly underrated, and foolishly neglected by those who read the criticisms on his *Travels*, published in six vols. in 1791. Notwithstanding the great increase in our knowledge of the Abyssinian languages which has been made within the last eighty years, and the publication of Ethiopic and Amharic texts

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

and documents bearing on the relations of Abyssinia with Rome and Portugal, the *History* of Ludolf is still indispensable for the Ethiopic and Amharic scholar, both for its varied contents and the accuracy of its information. How such a learned and comprehensive account of Abyssinia could have been compiled in the 17th century is a matter to wonder at.

After the expulsion of the Jesuits from Abyssinia (1632-1665) all relations between that country and Portugal and Italy were broken off, and whenever the kings of Abyssinia had the opportunity of showing their hatred for all Europeans they did so in no uncertain manner. Their treatment of du Roule's Mission, which will be mentioned in due course, is a proof of this. The importance of Ludolf's *History* cannot be over-estimated, but when its author died he left no one to carry on Ethiopic studies. He has been censured for not having trained pupils, but, had he done so they would have found nothing new to work at, for he had used up all the material available at that time. Thus Abyssinia and her languages passed out of men's minds, and it was not until James Bruce of Kinnaird (1730-1794) published his *Travels to discover the Source of the Nile in the years 1768, 1769, 1770, 1771, 1772 and 1773*, in six volumes, Dublin, 1790, that again attracted the attention of European scholars. This is not the place to insist on the value of his discovery of the source of the Blue Nile and of the great mass of information about Abyssinia which he packed into his delightful volumes, but here attention may well be called to the signal service which he rendered to Ethiopic learning. His experience of Oriental peoples, and wide knowledge of their manners and customs, and their cunning evasions and trickeries, and his tolerant behaviour towards their superstitions and weaknesses, enabled him to win the goodwill of the Abyssinians from their king downwards. They admired his skill in all sports and manly exercises, they appreciated his ready wit and caustic comments on men and things, and, above all, his humour and good nature; and it is clear that they feared his quick hot temper. He was a good Arabic scholar, and had a very useful working knowledge of Amharic, which enabled him to deal with the people in an easy manner. The king showed him great favour, and he won the queen-mother's gratitude and friendship by treating her children





JAMES BRUCE OF KINNAIRD, BORN AT KINNAIRD, STIRLINGSHIRE,  
ON 11 DEC, 1730, DIED 27 APRIL 1794  
THE GREAT AFRICAN TRAVELLER



## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

during an attack of small-pox from which, thanks to his skill, they recovered. The sick who trusted to a picture of the Virgin and a cross to heal them died. During the years in which he held a position of great honour in Abyssinia, he talked long and frequently with the priests and learned men about the history of their country, and he employed scribes to copy many of their most treasured manuscripts. The king and some of his officials gave him several manuscripts written in Ethiopic and Amharic, and in this way he acquired copies of the Holy Scriptures, the Canons of the Apostles, the *Häymānōz 'Abāu*, the Lives of the Saints, the *Organon* of the Virgin, the Book of Enoch (which survives in Ethiopic alone), and many other valuable works. All these manuscripts he brought with him to Europe, and some of them he presented to the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, and others to the Bodleian Library in Oxford. When Ludolf wrote his *History* he had access to none of these books, for they were unknown in Europe. Not content with collecting manuscripts in Abyssinia, Bruce devoted much time to an attempt to write the history of the country from native documents. From 'Amba Tāsūs, prince of Shoa, he obtained a list of the kings who reigned from the time of Christ to A.D. 960, and all the books of the Annals of Abyssinia. Another Chronicle was given to him by the king, and Rās Mikāēl, Governor of Tigray, gave him a copy of the Chronicle of Aksūm. With these and the help of priests and scribes he compiled the account of the kings and their reigns which he gives in the second and third volumes of his *Travels*. From this account most of the travellers in Abyssinia, English, French, Italian and German, have drawn their information about the history of the country from the middle of the 13th to the end of the 18th century, whilst for the earlier period of history they have had recourse to Ludolf's great work. Bruce was the first to show that he realized the importance of the native Chronicles, and the first to make the information contained in them accessible to everyone. By bringing the manuscripts which he acquired in Abyssinia, chiefly by payment, to Europe, and placing them in public libraries, he provided scholars with an abundance of new material and prepared the way for the development of Ethiopic Philology under Dillmann, Wright, Praetorius and Zotenberg, to mention only the illustrious dead. The dis-

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

tinguished traveller Henry Salt, following the example of Bruce, gave lists of kings in his *Travels*, London, 1814, p. 416 f., and a short summary of Abyssinian history, but these were inspired by Ludolf and Bruce, and have no special authority.

When the acrimonious discussions that were aroused by the appearance of Bruce's *Travels* had died down, Abyssinia and her literature dropped out of men's minds for about half a century, and it was not until August Dillmann (born 25th April 1823, died 4th July 1894) began to publish his works that a general interest in Ethiopic studies was re-awakened. He was a pupil of the great Ewald and Baur and devoted himself to the study of the Ethiopic MSS. in Paris, London and Oxford. He published a Catalogue of the Ethiopic MSS. in the British Museum, which included the MSS. collected by Isenberg and Krapf in 1847, and a Catalogue of the Ethiopic MSS in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, in 1848. Later he published two volumes of the Ethiopic text of the Bible (the *Octateuch* and the *Books of Kings*), the *Book of Enoch*, the *Book of Jubilees*, the *Ascension of Isaiah*, and an *Ethiopic Chrestomathy* and a *Grammar of the Ethiopic Language* (2nd edition, edited by Bezold, and English translation by J. A. Crichton, London, 1907). But the greatest of all his Ethiopic works is his *Lexicon Linguae Aethiopicae*, which appeared in 1865 (up to that date students had only the *Lexicon* of Ludolf to help them), and is a marvel of accurate learning. The Catalogues of Ethiopic MSS. published by Dillmann described the contents of 115 volumes, among which were some good copies of Chronicles, historical works and legendary compositions which were for the most part wholly unknown to scholars.

The fortunes of war enabled the British Army to take possession of and send to England some 350 of the one thousand manuscripts which King Theodore had collected from all parts of Abyssinia to form the Library of the Church of the Redeemer of the World at Maḡdalā. These were handed over to the Trustees of the British Museum on the 28th of August 1868, and were duly catalogued by Dr William Wright, then Assistant Keeper in the Department of Manuscripts in the British Museum. His Catalogue appeared in 1877 and contained descriptions of all the Ethiopic MSS. which had been acquired since 1848 as well as the Maḡdalā Collection, in all 408 MSS. This work gave a new impetus to the



CHRISTIAN FRIEDRICH AUGUST DILMANN, PROFESSOR OF  
THEOLOGY AT BERLIN BORN AT HILINGEN, 1828 DIED IN  
BERLIN 1894



## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

study of Ethiopic for it placed at the disposal of scholars nearly all the literary material which Abyssinia could be expected to supply. The value of the descriptions of the MSS. was greatly enhanced by the long extracts from texts which Wright printed throughout the Catalogue, the copious indexes, and the autotype plates, the appearance of which marked the first attempt made to study Ethiopic palacography. In 1877 H. Zotenberg published his Catalogue of the Ethiopic MSS. in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, and from this and the Catalogues of Dillmann and Wright, the contents of all the Ethiopic MSS. in Oxford, London and Paris, with the exception of the MSS. collected by d'Abbadie, were made known to scholars. Then began an era of publication of Ethiopic texts by students in Italy, France, Germany and England, and now the original texts of the more important Chronicles and the legendary history, to say nothing of the religious literature, of Abyssinia, are available for study. And many editors of texts have given translations of them with learned notes and commentaries.

The history of Abyssinia given in the following pages is based upon the statements made in the native Chronicles of the country, and on the legends and traditions which have been for many centuries, and still are, generally believed to be and are accepted as historical. The Abyssinians state as an undeniable fact that their kings are descended from Adam, who was the first king of their country, and whose name stands first in their Lists of Kings. They themselves can tell us nothing about the reigns of their antediluvian kings, and for their names they fall back upon the early genealogies given in the Book of Genesis. They claim that their post-diluvian kings were the descendants of Ham, the son of Noah, but they have no list of their native kings, and again fall back on the Book of Genesis. The antediluvian and post-diluvian kings are thus enumerated in Brit. Mus. MS. Orient. 821, fol. 366, col. 3, and in Bibl. Nat. MS. No. 142 published by Basset, *Études sur l'Histoire d'Éthiopie*, Paris, 1882:

Adam አደም: 'Adam begot Seth.	Gen. iv. 25.
Seth ሴት: Sēt begot Enos.	iv. 26; v. 3.
Enos ኔኖስ: Hēnōs begot Çainan.	v. 9.

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

Cainan ቃዩናን: <i>Kāynān</i> begot Mahalaleel.	Gen. v. 12.
Mahalaleel መላሌኤል: <i>Malālēl</i> begot Jared.	v. 15.
Jared ያረድ: <i>Yārēd</i> begot Enoch.	v. 18.
Enoch ሄኖክ: <i>Hēnōk</i> begot Methuselah.	v. 21.
Methuselah ማቱሳላ: <i>Mātūsālā</i> begot Lamech.	v. 25.
Lamech ሎጌሀ: <i>Lāmēh</i> begot Noah.	v. 29.
Noah ኖሀ: <i>Nōh</i> begot Shem.	v. 32.
Shēm ሴም: <i>Sēm</i> begot Arphaxad.	xi. 10.
Arphaxad አፋክስድ: <i>Alfāsked</i> begot Cainan.	Luke iii. 36.
Cainan ቃዩናን: <i>Kāynān</i> begot Salah.	iii. 35.
Salah ሳለ: <i>Sāla</i> begot Eber.	Gen. xi. 14.
Eber ኤቦር: <i>Ebor</i> begot Peleg.	xi. 16.
Peleg ፋሌቅ: <i>Fālēk</i> begot Reu.	xi. 18.
Reu ራግወ: <i>Rāgwē</i> begot Serug.	xi. 20.
Serug ሴሩክ: <i>Sērūh</i> begot Nahor.	xi. 22.
Nahor ኖኮር: <i>Nākōr</i> begot Terah.	xi. 24.
Terah ታራ: <i>Tārā</i> begot Abram.	xi. 26.
Abram አብርሃም: <i>Abrēhām</i> begot Isaac.	xxi. 3.
Isaac ዩሳፋቅ: <i>Yeshākē</i> begot Jacob.	xxv. 26.
Jacob ያሳቆብ: <i>Yāḥōb</i> begot Judah.	xxix. 35.
Judah ዩሁዳ: <i>Yēhūdā</i> begot Pharez.	xxxviii. 29.
Pharez ፋራስ: <i>Fārēs</i> begot Hezrom.	xlvi. 12.
Hezrom ኤስሮም: <i>Esrōm</i> begot Aram.	Matt. i. 3, 4.
Aram አራም: <i>Ārām</i> begot Amminadab.	Ruth. iv. 19.
Amminadab አሚናዳብ: <i>Amīnādāb</i> begot Nahshon.	iv. 20.
Nahshon ነአሰን: <i>Nāʾasēn</i> begot Salmon.	iv. 20.
Salmon ሰልሞን: <i>Salmōn</i> begot Boaz.	iv. 21.
Boaz ቦኢዝ: <i>Bōʾēz</i> begot Obed.	iv. 21.
Obed ኢዮቤድ: <i>Īyōbēd</i> begot Jesse.	iv. 22.
Jesse ዕሄይ: <i>Eshēy</i> begot David.	iv. 22.



## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

David ጳዊት: *Dāwīt* begot Solomon.      2 Sam. xii. 24.

Solomon ስሎሞን: *Salōmān* begot 'Ĕbna  
Ḥakīm.

Now although this List of Kings appears in the native Chronicles, and with but little alteration in the great work the *KEBRA NAGAST*, or "Glory of Kings," it has, obviously, no historical value, and it can only have been drawn up in the first instance to fill the gap in the King List from Adam to Solomon. And it is clear that some at least of the sages of Ethiopia had grave doubts about it, for though they might believe that the Hebrew Patriarchs and their descendants were kings of Ethiopia *de jure*, they at the same time knew that during their lifetime there reigned in Abyssinia men who were not Hebrews and who were kings *de facto*. The Abyssinian Chronicles admit that during this early period only a section of the people followed the religion of the Hebrews, and that the rest worshipped 'Arwē አርዊ: , *i.e.* a serpent, or dragon, or beast of some kind. The tradition published by Littmann (*Aksūm*, I. 39) says that a Serpent called Waināba reigned over all Abyssinia for a period of four hundred years, and that all the people brought him tribute, *viz.* the eldest daughter of some man and about 50 quarts of milk at regular intervals. This Serpent was killed by one 'Angabō, who succeeded him on the throne and reigned for two hundred years, and married the "Queen of the South," *i.e.* the Queen of Sheba, who visited King Solomon in Jerusalem. Thus for six hundred years before the birth of Solomon there reigned kings who were not Hebrews and were pagans and idolaters. We may note in passing that an early Egyptian king made a serpent to represent his Horus name, and



that the Era of Nubti is given as four hundred years.

Wiedemann thinks that that era was mythological in character, which is of course very possible. It may be wondered if the early Abyssinians had any knowledge of the Serpent king in Egypt, and of the 400 years Era of Nubti.

Abyssinian writers have never attempted to hide their belief that their ancestors were idolaters in the time of Teraḥ the father

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

of Abram, or Abraham, and even earlier, and the KEBRA NAGAST describes how Abraham introduced into Abyssinia the worship of the One True God. Thus in Chaps. XII and XIII of that work, it is said that Peleg, Reu, Serug, Nahor and Terah "Made magical images. And they went to the tombs of their fathers, and made an image of gold, and silver and brass, and a devil used to hold converse with them out of each of the images of their fathers, and say unto them, 'O my son So and so, offer up unto me as a sacrifice the son whom thou lovest.' And they slaughtered their sons and their daughters to the devils, and they poured out innocent blood to filthy devils." The narrative goes on to say that Terah used to send his son Abraham out to sell the images that he made, but the young man had no belief in their powers, and decried the images which his father wanted him to sell, and no one would buy them. On his way back to his house he set down the images and called upon them to give him bread to eat and water to drink, and when they failed to do this he knocked them over and kicked them about and smashed them with stones, and refused to regard them as gods and saviours. Then, turning to the East, he stretched out his hands and called upon the Maker of the Universe, the Creator of heaven and earth, sun and moon, land and sea, the visible and the invisible, to be his God. In answer to his appeal a blazing chariot of fire appeared and Abraham was afraid, and fell upon his face (see Budge, *Queen of Sheba*, p. 10). This tradition is of interest for it shows that it was a convert from the Sabæan to the Hebrew Religion who brought the knowledge of the One True God into Abyssinia.

In the list of post-diluvian kings given above there is no mention of Ham whom some of the Abyssinians claim to be an ancestral king of Kūsh. And this is not to be wondered at, for the KEBRA NAGAST says that God "destroyed the seed of Ham," which He had condemned to be slaves (*Queen of Sheba*, pp. 102, 126). Clearly from this the Abyssinians preferred to be regarded as the sons of Shem, rather than of Ham, and Kūsh is not mentioned in the KEBRA NAGAST. But a tradition is current among the Abyssinians, as Littmann has shown (*Aksūm*, I. 38), that Ham begot Kūsh, and Kūsh begot Aethiopia, after whom the country is called Aethiopia, and whose grave is to be seen in Aksūm. And

## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

Aethiopsis begot 'Aksūmāwī,  
'Aksūmāwī begot Malakyā 'Aksūm,  
Malakyā 'Aksūm begot six sons, viz.

Sūm.

Nafās.

Bagī'ō.

Kūdūkī.

'Akhōrō.

Farhebā.

Where Aethiopsis reigned is not known, but it seems that 'Aksūmāwī was the founder of Aksūm, the capital of Abyssinia, and the ecclesiastical capital of the country even at the present time. 'Aksūmāwī and his father, and son, and grandsons, were probably pagan Semites the object of whose cult was the Serpent. The six sons of Malakyā 'Aksūm are called the "fathers" of Aksūm, and they probably represent the Dynasty of the Serpent which was destroyed by 'Angabō, but they were never kings of Abyssinia, and no tradition says they were. The word 'Arwē **አርዊ** means not only serpent, but beast, noxious beast and the like, and it was probably applied to idolaters and their cults as a term of abuse and contempt. Popular tradition, however, gave to the word its commonest meaning of "serpent," and native writers falling in with this view proceeded to describe the monster. Thus they said he was 170 cubits long, 4 cubits wide, each tooth was a cubit long, his horn was 3 cubits long, his body was like iron and lead, and his eyes were like flames of fire under jet-black eyebrows. Several mentions of such monster serpents are met with in Egyptian literature. On the ridge of the Mountain of Bakhau lived a serpent that was 30 or 50 or 70 cubits long, and the fore-part of him was covered with flints and plates of metal. His name was "Dweller in the fire," and the knowledge of it enabled the deceased to overcome Set (*Book of the Dead*, Chap. 108). The serpent on the enchanted island was 30 cubits long; its beard was 2 cubits long, its eyebrows were of lapis lazuli, and its body was covered with gold scales. The serpent Nehaḥer was 420 cubits long, and the monster in the Twelfth Division of the Tuat was 1300 cubits long, and the throne of Osiris was guarded by a monster serpent. The mere name of the serpent suggested evil both to the Egyptians

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

and Abyssinians, and among the former the serpent Āpep was the personification of all evil and the everlasting enemy of the various Sun-gods of Egypt, Horus the Elder, Rā, and Horus, the son of Osiris and Isis. Āpep was never killed by any Sun-god but only paralysed temporarily, and the Abyssinian 'Angabō who slew the serpent Waināba did not kill him once and for all, for we read in the Chronicles that 'Arwē, the serpent, was killed about 2000 years later by the Nine Saints who came into Abyssinia in the 5th or 6th century A.D.

The unhistorical character of the List of Kings given above (pp. 187-8) is also proved by the fact that the Abyssinians have never attempted to supply a list of the years of their reigns. According to this list David, King of Israel, was the 34th king of Abyssinia from Adam, therefore in the interval between B.C. 5500 (when according to them the world was created) and the reign of David (about B.C. 1000), only 33 kings reigned, and the average length of their reigns was about 136 years, which is absurd. The aboriginal people of Abyssinia were Negroes, and the various districts of the country were probably governed by heads of tribes who were similar to the modern shēkhs. The most powerful of these probably regarded themselves as kings, but it is very doubtful if any one of them ruled over all Abyssinia. About the period from Adam to Noah nothing is known, and Abyssinian tradition is silent about it. During the next period, *i.e.* from Abraham (say B.C. 2000 to 1900) to Solomon (say B.C. 970), according to the Chronicles the following kings reigned:

HEBREWS	ABYSSINIANS	
Noah		
Shem	Kūsh	
Arphaxad	Ham	} Dynasty of Kūsh
Cainan	Aethiopsis	
Salah	'Aksūmāwī	
Eber	Malakyā 'Aksūm	
Peleg	Sūm	
Reu	Nafās	
Serug	Bagī'ō	
Nahor	Kūdūkī	
Terah	'Akhōrō	
Abraham	Farhebā	

# THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

HEBREWS	ABYSSINIANS	
Isaac		
Jacob		
Judah		
Pharez		
Esrom	'Arwē, and 20 or 30 kings of his race reigned 400 years in Tigray. <sup>1</sup>	} The Serpent Dynasty
Aram		
Amminadab		
Nahshon		
Salmon	'Angabō, ancestor of Mākēdā, Queen of Sheba, and slayer of the Serpent, reigned 200 years. Gēdūr reigned 100 years. Sēbadō reigned 50 years. Kawnāsyā reigned one year. He was the father (?) of Mākēdā, Queen of Sheba, and reigned 50 years.	} Native African Dynasty
Boaz		
Obed		
Jesse		
David		
Solomon		

In the last line of the first section of the King List quoted above Solomon is said to have begot 'Ēbna Ḥakīm ኢብና ሐክም: or his son by Mākēdā, the Queen of Sheba. Now this name is the transcription into Ethiopic letters of the Arabic ابن الحكيم, *i.e.* "Son of the wise man," *i.e.* Solomon, and the Abyssinians regard it only as a title of Menyelek, the founder of the line of kings of their country, who established his kingdom at Aksūm in the 10th century B.C.

The story of the journey of Mākēdā from Sābā to Jerusalem and her intercourse with Solomon is told in the *KEBRA NAGAST*, and it is convenient to give here a brief summary of it before we proceed to discuss the other sections of the King List of Abyssinia. Many eminent scholars have accepted the story as historical, and I think on the whole they were right, and it is believed to this day by all classes in Abyssinia, who really regard Solomon as the first real king of their country, and the founder of their holy city of Aksūm.

<sup>1</sup> In the middle of the last century the natives of Guendguendiē, on the plateau of Agamy, to the north-east of Tigray, believed that a serpent called Gabella was an incarnation of evil, and that he dwelt in a cave in the mountains, where he had been driven by the prayers of the monks, who stoned him daily. See de Jacobis, *Annales de la propagation de la foi*, Sept. 1849.

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

But it must be admitted that some consider the whole story as a legend invented at quite a late period to flatter the national vanity of the Abyssinians, and having no historical foundation. Others think that the legend is of Arabian origin, which has been borrowed by the Abyssinians and incorporated into their literature, but that parts of it may be distortions of actual historical facts. Others point out pertinently that 'Ēbna Ḥakīm, who lived in the 10th century B.C., cannot possibly have been the founder of Aksūm, because that city was not founded until the 1st century B.C. Neither Agatharcides, who flourished in the 2nd century B.C., nor Strabo, nor Pliny the Elder even mention it, and the name of Aksūm is found for the first time in the *Periplus*. See Basset, *Études*, p. 214; Dillmann, *Ueber die Anfänge des axumitischen Reiches*, Berlin, 1879; and Halévy, *Mélanges d'épigraphie*, Paris, 1874, chap. 17. But we may leave the anachronism of Aksūm out of the question here. The legend of the Queen of the South who came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon is mentioned in the Gospels (Matt. xii. 42; Luke xi. 31) and was clearly well known in the 1st century A.D., and it is difficult to believe that it has no historical foundation.

### THE VISIT OF THE QUEEN OF THE SOUTH TO SOLOMON

Our Lord Jesus Christ said, "The Queen of the South shall rise up on the Day of Judgment, and shall dispute with, and condemn, and overcome this generation who would not hearken unto the preaching of My word, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon" (see Matt. xii. 42). And the Queen of the South of whom He spake was the queen of Ethiopia. And in the words "ends of the earth" [He maketh allusion] to the delicacy of the constitution of women, and the long distance of the journey, and the burning heat of the sun, and the hunger on the way, and the thirst for water. And the Queen of the South was very beautiful in face, and her stature was superb, and her understanding and intelligence, which God had given her, were of such high character that she went to Jerusalem to hear the wisdom of Solomon; now this she did by the command of God, and it was His good pleasure. And moreover, she was exceedingly rich, for God had given her glory,

## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

and riches, and gold, and silver, and splendid apparel, and camels, and slaves, and caravans, which trafficked for her by sea and by land, and in India and in Aswān (Syene). Now there was a certain captain of a caravan, one Tamrīn, who possessed 520 camels and 370 ships. And when Solomon heard of this rich Ethiopian merchant, he sent him a message, and instructed him to bring him some of the produce of Arabia, red gold, and black wood that could not be bored by worms (ebony?) and sapphires. And Tamrīn, the merchant of the queen of Ethiopia, went to Solomon with these things, and Solomon took them and paid for them liberally. Tamrīn stayed several days in Jerusalem, and greatly admired the wisdom of Solomon, and the manner in which he ruled his people and administered his kingdom, and at his direct and ready speech, and the sweetness of his words which were like water to the thirsty, bread to the hungry, medicine to the sick, and clothes to the naked. Tamrīn was amazed at his impartiality and justice, and dazzled by the handsome person of Solomon and the wealth and splendour in which he lived. Having disposed of his wares and stayed over long in Jerusalem, Tamrīn with great regret left the city and set out to return to his mistress and to render an account of what he had done on her behalf. When he saw the queen he described to her the great temple that Solomon was building in Jerusalem, and how 700 carpenters and 800 masons were working on it, and the beauty of its decorations. Day by day he related to the queen stories of the power, and wisdom and justice of Solomon, and at length she began to question him about Solomon himself. The more she heard of him from Tamrīn, the more she marvelled, and God planted in her the desire to go to Jerusalem that she might see the wonderful man, and above all that she might learn wisdom from him. The more she heard the more she longed to go, but the length and the difficulty of the journey terrified her. Finally her longing to go to Jerusalem became so great, that casting all her fear about the length, and hardships and fatigue of the journey from her, she announced to her people that she desired wisdom and understanding, and was smitten with love for the former, and constrained by the cords of the latter, and that she intended to go and learn both from Solomon. Her people answered, "Lady, wisdom is not lacking in

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

thee, and it is because you are wise that you love wisdom. As far as we are concerned, if you go we will go too: if you stay here we will stay also. We will die with thee and will live with thee." Thereupon Tamrīn made ready her caravan which consisted of 797 camels, and countless mules and asses, and the queen set out on her journey with great pomp and majesty, and an enormous baggage train.

When she arrived in Jerusalem Solomon welcomed her cordially, paid her great honours, and gave her apartments in his palace. His cooks supplied her and her suite with food both morning and evening, and sent her wine, honey and sweetmeats from his own table. A company of 25 singing men and 25 singing maidens provided, presumably, with harps of various kinds, pipes, castanets, cymbals and tambourines, waited upon her to discourse sweet music to her day by day. Solomon paid her visits, which pleased him, and she returned his visits and was delighted with the courtesy of his behaviour towards her, and his wisdom, and judgment, and sweet voice, and his eloquent and fluent speech. "Everything that he spake was perfect," and she thanked God Who had made her to tread on the threshold of his gate, and to hear his voice. When she went to inspect the building of the House of God she noted that he set out the measurements for the builders, and estimated the weight of material required, and showed the carpenters how to use hammer, drill and chisel, and the masons how to use the square, and the circle-measure, and the cubit rule; and she learned later that he knew the languages of beasts and birds, and that he possessed Words-of-power which compelled the spirits and the devils to appear and to do his will. This great wisdom God gave him because he had not asked for fame, or riches, or triumph in battle, but wisdom. Solomon and Mākēdā conversed long and frequently, and the chief burden of every discourse of his was the beauty of wisdom. His words sank into her heart, and at length she consulted him about her religion. She admitted that she was a Sun-worshipper, though others adored stones, trees, and graven images, and she said that she had heard of the God of Israel, and the Ark of the Covenant and the "Tablet" of Moses the Prophet. When Solomon had explained to her the might and power of God the Creator, the God of Israel, the queen abandoned



## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

the worship of the Sun, and became a follower of the One True God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth.

Mākēdā passed six months in Jerusalem and visited Solomon and was visited by him at frequent intervals, and her knowledge of the Religion of Israel increased greatly. At the end of this time she sent a message to the king telling him that she wished to return to her own country, though, she said, she would rather remain in Jerusalem to receive further instruction in the acquisition of wisdom. When Solomon received her message, he pondered deeply in his heart, and he conceived the idea of marrying Mākēdā, whom he considered to be "a woman of splendid beauty." In answer to the queen's message Solomon asked her if she really intended to leave Jerusalem without seeing the manner of his life in his palace, and he invited her to come and dwell with him for a season so that he might complete her instruction in wisdom. The queen accepted his invitation and removed to his house, and a place was specially prepared for her from which she could watch the great banquet which he had arranged to hold in her honour; she could see everything and not be seen. The chamber in which she sat was decorated with precious stones, costly carpets covered the floor, purple hangings covered the walls, and the air was redolent with the perfumes of oil of myrrh and cassia, which were sprinkled about, and with the scent of aromatic powders which were being burnt in vessels placed in the room. In this fragrant chamber she was served with a sumptuous meal, and she ate freely of the highly-seasoned dishes which were set before her, and drank her fill of spiced wine. Solomon intended that both the peppery meats and the spiced wine with its sub-acid flavour should both increase her appetite and make her thirsty, and they had this effect. When the royal banquet was ended Solomon came to the queen, and said to her, "Take thou thine ease here for love's sake until daybreak." And she replied, "Swear to me by thy God, the God of Israel, that thou wilt not take me by force. For if I, a maiden, be seduced, I should travel on my journey [back] in sorrow, and affliction, and tribulation." Solomon said, "I swear unto thee that I will not take thee by force, but thou must swear unto me that thou wilt not take by force anything that is in my house." And the queen laughed and said unto him, "Why being a wise

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

man dost thou speak as a fool? Thinkest thou that I shall steal anything, or carry off out of the house of the king, anything that the king hath not given unto me? Do not imagine that I have come hither through love of riches. Moreover, my own kingdom is as wealthy as thine, and there is nothing which I wish for that I lack. Assuredly I have come only in quest of thy wisdom." And Solomon said to her, "As thou wouldest make me swear, swear thou also to me, for swearing is meet for both [of us], so that neither of us may be unjustly treated. And if thou wilt not make me swear I will not make thee swear." And the queen said unto him, "Swear to me that thou wilt not take me by force, and I on my part will swear not to take by force thy possessions"; and he swore to her and made her swear.

Then the servants prepared a bed for Solomon on one side of that chamber, and a bed for the queen on the other. And Solomon told a man servant to wash the stand that held the water pots, and to set in it a vessel full of water whilst the queen was watching, and having done this to close the doors of the chamber and go to bed. This order was given to the manservant presumably in the Hebrew tongue, which the queen did not understand, and when it was carried out the young man went to bed. And the king went up to his bed and the queen to hers. The chamber was lighted by "shining pearls" which were set in the roof, and by their light, which was as bright as that of the sun, moon, and stars, Solomon watched the queen, who had dropped off into a light slumber. Presently Māḳēdā woke up and found that her lips and mouth and throat were dry, and that owing to the peppery food and wine of which she had partaken, her throat was parched, and she was exceedingly thirsty. Though she smacked her lips together and moved her tongue about, no moisture came to her mouth, and she determined to get up and drink water from the vessel which she had seen the young man place filled on the stand. For a time she lay watching Solomon carefully, and having made up her mind that he was asleep, she rose up silently and, making no sound with her feet, crossed the chamber to the door, and going to the water stand, took the vessel in her hand to drink from it. Now Solomon had not been asleep, and when he saw the queen go to the water pot, he leaped up, and seized the hand with which she was lifting

## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

the vessel to her lips and stopped her from drinking. And he said to her, "Why hast thou broken thy oath that thou wouldest not take by force anything that is in my house?" And being afraid she replied, "Is the oath broken by my drinking water?" And the king said, "Is there anything that thou hast seen under the heavens that is of more value than water?" And the queen said, "I have sinned against myself and thou art released from [thy] oath; but let me drink water for the sake of my thirst." And Solomon said, "Am I truly released from the oath which thou didst make me swear?" And the queen replied, "Be released from thy oath, only let me drink water." And he permitted her to drink water, and after she had drunk water, he worked his will with her, and they slept together.

After his union with Mākēdā Solomon had a dream in which he saw a brilliant sun come down from heaven in great splendour and tarry over Israel, and then it passed to Ethiopia over which it shone with still greater splendour; then he woke up and was greatly troubled in mind. And he marvelled as he looked on the queen, for she was vigorous in strength, and her form was beautiful, and she was a virgin undefiled; for she had reigned for six years in Sābā, and notwithstanding her gracious attraction, and her splendid form, had preserved her body pure. At length the queen said, "Dismiss me, and let me depart to my own country." And Solomon gave her rich gifts, and gorgeous apparel, and six thousand camels and wagons for traversing the desert, and a ship to sail on the sea, and a vessel "wherein one could traverse the air," which Solomon had made by the wisdom which God had given unto him. And he set her on her way with great pomp and ceremony, and taking her aside he gave her the ring that was on his little finger, saying, "Take [this] so that thou mayest not forget me. And if it happen that I obtain seed from thee, this ring shall be a sign of it, and if it be a man child he shall come to me. And the peace of God be with thee.....worship God with all thy heart and soul.....and may God be with thee. Go in peace." So Mākēdā went on her way, and when she came to Bālā Zadīsāreyā, the pains of child birth seized her and she brought forth a man child nine months and five days after she left Solomon. When the days of her purification were ended she came to her own country with great

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

pomp and ceremony, amid general rejoicings. To her nobles she gave gifts of gold and silver, and purple and hyacinthine robes of honour. She administered her country with wisdom, and God made her kingdom strong. Her son by Solomon grew and flourished, and she called him Bayna Leḥkem, *i.e.* Ibn al-Ḥakīm or "son of the wise man." (See Budge, *Queen of Sheba*, pp. 19-38.) The mention of the gift of a ship by Solomon suggests that the queen would have to cross the sea on returning to her own country, and that her native land of Sābā was on the western and not eastern coast of the Red Sea.

In the History of the Kings of Dabra Yoḥannes (published by Conti Rossini in *Ricordi di un soggiorno in Eritrea*, Asmara, 1903) we have the following: Saul reigned 40 years, David reigned 40 years. David begot Solomon, Solomon reigned 40 years. The Queen of the South [was] the daughter of 'Agābōs አጋቦስ. The Queen of the South with her father and the Blessed Ones slew 'Arwē Medr አርዌ፡ጦድሮ፣ and after he died she went to Solomon the king. And he said to her, "Whence comest thou?" And she answered and said, "I am from the country of Ethiopia." And after she had spoken to him he showed her all the Ten Laws of the Kingdom. And he gave her strong meat and drink. And Solomon slept. And there was water which he had set out there in his wisdom, and as he woke up from his sleep, the queen was pouring out some of that water into her bowl so that she might drink. And Solomon seized her hand and said to her, "Was there not an oath between us? I swore not to approach thy vessel, and thou didst swear not to approach mine." And she said to him, "Let me alone. After I have drunk thou canst fulfil thy desire." Solomon begot 'Ēbna Ḥakīm by the Queen of Sheba, 'Ēbna Ḥakīm was born in the Ḥamāsēn ሐማሴን. His royal name was Menilek ጦረክ. He reigned 15 years. [The place where he was born is pointed out near the village of Addi-Shmagali, a few hours north-west of Asmara. R. Sundström in a letter to Littmann.]

Such is the story of the journey of Mākēdā to Jerusalem as told in the KEBRA NAGAST, but other versions are widespread in Abyssinia, and among them as worthy of special mention is the account which the Rev. R. Sundström, of the Swedish Mission in the Colonia Eritrea, sent to Littmann who published it in his

## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

*Bibliotheca Abessinica*, I. Leyden, 1904. This version of the legend was heard by a man of the Bet-Dyuk, a Tigray tribe, at Aksūm, and was written down at Gheleb by an evangelist of the Swedish Mission. An Arabic version of the legend was printed by Bezold (*Kebra Nagast*, Munich, 1905), and a French paraphrase of it was given by Amélineau (*Contes et Romans*, Paris, 1888, tom. I. p. 144 ff.), and an English translation of Bezold's text in Budge, *Queen of Sheba*, p. xxxix. According to Sundström's text, the mother of Solomon's son was called 'Ētyō 'Azēb, *i.e.* "Queen of the South," and she was a native of Tigray, where the people worshipped a Serpent, to whom each man in turn gave his eldest daughter and 300 litres of mead and 300 litres of milk. When 'Ētyō 'Azēb was tied up to a tree waiting for the dragon to come to devour her, some saints appeared, and having found out where the Serpent was, they went and attacked him, and smote him with the Cross and killed him. Whilst they were doing this a drop of the Serpent's blood fell on her heel, which immediately became an ass's heel. The saints set her free and told her to go back to her village. When she arrived there the people drove her away, and she went and passed the night in a tree. She went back the next day and when she persuaded the people to follow her and had shown them the dead serpent, they made her their queen. Soon after this she heard that King Solomon in Jerusalem cured every one with a disease who came to him, and she determined to go to him in order to get rid of her ass's heel.

She and her minister, a girl, dressed their hair like a man's and set out for Jerusalem. When the queen came to the king's door her foot became as it was before. When they entered the presence the king ordered bread, meat and mead to be brought, but as they ate little the king suspected they were women. In the evening he ordered beds to be made for them both in his chamber, and he hung a skin of honey with a hole in it over a bowl so that it might run down into it. The king slept with his eyes half open, and when he was awake he shut them. When his eyes were shut the women said, "Now he is asleep," and they got up and began to lick the honey from the bowl. Then the king knew they were women, and he got up and took them and slept with them both. This done, he gave each a staff of silver and a

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

ring, saying, "If it be a girl let her take this staff and come to me; if it be a boy let him take this ring and come to me." The queen bought a mirror, and both returned to Tigray with child, and each gave birth to a son.

When the boys were grown up the queen gave her son the mirror, and told him that his father was like him, and that when he went to Jerusalem the king would set one of his subjects on his throne and hide himself; and she warned him not to salute the man he would see on the throne. Both boys went to Jerusalem, and when they arrived at the palace Solomon said, "If they are my sons let them wait"; and he kept himself from them for three years. At the end of this time he seated one of his subjects on his throne, and having dressed himself in rags hid himself in a stable. When the boys were brought into the throne room, the queen's son made no movement, for he knew from his mirror that the man was not Solomon, but the other boy saluted him that sat on the throne. Solomon peeped out of the stable, and the queen's son catching sight of him he went up to him and saluted him. Then Solomon said, "My true son! The other is also my son, but he is a fool." Solomon associated the queen's son with him in ruling the kingdom, and the people complained, and asked him to send Menyelek back whence he came. The king said, "He is my eldest son, let your eldest sons join him, and let them all go to Ethiopia together"; to this they agreed.

Now there were two Arks in Jerusalem, the Ark of Michael and the Ark of Mary, and Solomon told Menyelek to take the Ark of Michael and depart. But Menyelek exchanged the covers on the two Arks, and taking the cover of Michael and the Ark of Mary he and his companions set out for Ethiopia. When Solomon found out the deceit which his son had practised, he sent messengers ordering him to give back the Ark of Mary; but Menyelek refused to do so, and continued his journey. At Kazḥ Kōr the deacon who was carrying the Ark, Gabra Ḥeywat, died, and the Ark would not allow itself to be moved until he was buried canonically. At length they reached Tigray and came to Aksūm, where the Devil was building a house in which to fight God. The party arrived just at the moment when he had raised a huge stone upright, but when they told him that Mary had come

## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

he ran away leaving the stone standing where it was. Then they built a church to Mary with the stones that the Devil had collected; the big stone is to be seen at Aksūm to this day. The stone here referred to is of course one of the well-known "obelisks" of Aksūm which have been described by Bruce, Bent, Littmann and many other travellers.

The *Qur'ān*, in the Surah on the Ant, tells the story of how the Queen of Sheba was converted to Islām. The existence of the queen was first made known to Solomon by the lapwing, who reported to him that she and her people were Sun-worshippers. Muslim writers call her Balkīs, and make her the daughter of Al-Hudhād ibn Sharhabīl, or Sharabil ibn Mālik, and a descendant of Yārab ibn Kahtān; she is said to have been the twenty-second ruler of Yaman. Solomon sent a letter to Balkīs by the lapwing, and the bird dropped it into her bosom when her army was gathered about her. The letter was scented with musk and sealed with the king's famous seal. In it he ordered her not to fight against him, but to surrender herself and her people to him, *i.e.* to embrace Islām. The queen decided to send gifts to him, and despatched to him 500 men slaves, 500 women slaves, 500 bricks of gold, a gold crown set with pearls, and large quantities of musk, amber, etc. The boys who went with the gifts she dressed as girls and the girls as boys, and they carried to Solomon an undrilled pearl, and an onyx with a crooked hole in it. Solomon received Balkīs in a courtyard surrounded by a wall built of gold and silver bricks, and when she entered it she saw there her throne which she had locked up in a strong fort guarded by soldiers. Solomon's Wazīr Asaf had pronounced the ineffable name of God, and had thus brought the throne from Sābā in the twinkling of an eye. When the queen went into the palace she had to pass over a glass floor laid over running water in which fish were swimming; thinking that she would have to step into the water she raised her robe, and so discovered her hairy ass's foot, which however Solomon had already seen in his magic mirror. When the queen saw Solomon and his splendour she said, "I resign myself unto God, the Lord of all creatures." Solomon wished to marry her, but on thinking of her ass's leg he hesitated, and it is doubtful if he did so even after the devils by means of a magic depilatory had removed

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

all the hair from her leg. See the translations of the *Qur'ān* by Sale, Wherry and Rodwell.

### THE ABYSSINIAN KING LISTS

The line of kings who were descended from Solomon and his son by the Queen of Sheba was broken about A.D. 950, and for about 300 years the throne was occupied by the *Zāgwē*. After the restoration of the Solomonic line about the middle of the 13th century, great literary activity prevailed in Abyssinia, and during the 14th century the chronologers and scribes compiled histories of their country to which they prefixed lists of its kings from Adam downwards. Their sources of information are unknown to us, but though their King Lists bear evidence that many parts of them were based upon legend and tradition, other parts suggest that the scribes had access to chronological and historical documents of some kind. It is probable that such documents were written in Coptic or Arabic, and were brought into Abyssinia by the monks who fled from Egypt and Nubia before the Arabs, and sought asylum in Abyssinia. The Ethiopic MSS. in London, Paris and Oxford contain several lists of kings, and an examination of these shows that the Abyssinians never possessed an authoritative and complete King List. Some lists give the names of the kings beginning with Adam and ending with the kings who were reigning when they were written. Others begin with David, king of Israel, and end with reigning kings; and these make David's grandson, 'Ēbna Ḥakīm, the first king of Aksūm. In both classes many variant spellings of names occur, and the order and numbers of the kings are rarely the same. Both classes of King Lists make it clear that in the 13th and 14th centuries the chronographers of Abyssinia did not know how many kings had reigned over their country, or the exact order of their succession. The kings who reigned over Abyssinia from the time of Mākēdā, the Queen of Sheba, to the present time may be divided into five groups, or if we consider Adam to be the first king of the country, six.

I. The kings who reigned from Adam (B.C. 5500, when the world was created) to 'Ēbna Ḥakīm, or to give him his throne name Menyelek I, about B.C. 950.



## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

II. The kings who reigned from Menyelek I to Bāzēn, or Tāzēn, in the 8th year of whose reign Christ was born.

III. The kings who reigned from Bāzēn to 'Abrehā, who died about A.D. 356 (?).

IV. The kings who reigned from 'Abrehā to the time of the break in the Solomonic line, about A.D. 950.

V. The Zāgwē kings, who reigned from about A.D. 950 to A.D. 1260.

VI. The kings who reigned after the Zāgwē to the present time.

Some chroniclers have declined to regard the Zāgwē rulers of Abyssinia as kings, and in consequence have omitted them from the King Lists which they compiled.

The first Europeans to publish lists of the kings of Abyssinia were Marianus Victor and Tellez, who flourished in the 17th century; the list of the former contained about 132 names, and that of the latter 99 names. Tellez laughed at the list of Marianus, which included the names of the Zāgwē kings, and the names of some others which were wanting in his own list, and Ludolf (*Hist. Aeth.* II. 5. 2) was justified in censuring Tellez for excluding the Zāgwē from his list.

The next European to publish a list of Abyssinian kings was Bruce, who spent much time, trouble and money in acquiring the splendid Ethiopic MSS., now Nos. XXV—XXXII in the Bodleian Library, Oxford. His list is based chiefly on the information which he derived from native scribes, but he had no belief in its authenticity or completeness, and from his remarks in his *Travels* (II. 118 f.) it seems that he regarded the list he gave and all the others which he saw as wholly untrustworthy. In 1809–10 Henry Salt compiled a list of kings in much the same way as Bruce had done, and printed it in his *Voyage to Abyssinia*, London, 1814. According to the lists of Bruce and Salt the kings of the first group of kings of the Solomonic line were:

	BRUCE	Years		SALT	Years
1	Menilek, or David I	4	1	Menilek, or Ibn Hakim	29
2	Hendedya, or Zagdur	1	2	Za Hendedya	1
3	Awida	11	3	Awda	11

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

BRUCE	Years	SALT	Years
4 Aufyi	3	4 Za Awsyu	3
5 Sawé	31	5 Za Tsawe	3, 10 m.
6 Gefaya	15	6 Za Gesyu	$\frac{1}{2}$ a day
7 Katar	15	7 Za Maute	8, 4 m.
8 Mouta	20	8 Za Bahse	9
9 Bahas	9	9 Kāwuda	2
10 Kawida	2	10 Kanazi	10
11 Kanata	10	11 Haduna	9
12 Katzina	9	12 Za-Wasih	1
13 Wazeha	1	13 Zah-dir	2
14 Hazer	2	14 Za Awzena	1
15 Kalas	6	15 Za Ber-was	29
16 Solaya	16	16 Za Mahasi	1
17 Falaya	26	17 Zabaesi Bazen	16
18 Aglebu	3	In the 8th year of his	
19 Asisena	1	reign Christ was born.	
20 Brus	29		
21 Mohesa	1		
22 Bazen	16		
22 kings reigned 231 ( <i>sic</i> ) years.		17 kings reigned 135 years 10 months and $\frac{1}{2}$ a day.	

Bruce and Salt derived the names in these lists from a List of the Kings of Aksūm similar to that given in Brit. Mus. MS. Oriental No. 821, fol. 28 b, which is as follows:

	Years
1 'Ebna 'Ēl-Ḥakīm ሰብነ፣አልሐኪም፣	24
2 Za Handadyū ዘሐንደድድ፣	8
3 Za 'Āweda ዘኅውደ፣	11
4 Za 'Awesyō ዘአውስዮ፣	3
5 Za Ṣawē' ዘአውዕ፣	31
6 Za Gasyō ዘገስዮ፣አስከ፣ቀትር፣	$\frac{1}{2}$ a day
7 Za Mawaṭ ዘመወጥ፣	20, 1 m.
8 Za Baḥas ዘበሐስ፣	9
9 Za Tāwedā ዘታውዳ፣	2
10 Za Kanaz ዘቀነገ፣	10
11 Za Ḥadēnā ዘሐደና፣	9
12 Za Wanḥā ዘወንኃ፣	1

## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

		Years
13	Za Ḥadēnā	፳፻፩
14	Za Kal'ākū	፳፻፮
15	Za Satyō	፳፻፲፭
16	Za Fīlyā	፳፻፳፭
17	Za 'Aglebū	፳፻፷
18	Za 'Awsinā	፳፻፲
19	Za Birwās	፳፻፳፱
20	Za Māhelē	፳፻፲
21	Za B'esī Bāzēn	፳፻፲፭
22 kings reigned 228 years 1 month and $\frac{1}{2}$ a day.		

But between the first year of Menyelek's reign to the birth of Christ is a period of about 950 years, during which at least 62 kings, each reigning on an average 15 years, must have reigned. Therefore each list only contains a selection of king's names, a fact which suggests either that the scribes did not know the names of the other kings, or that they wilfully omitted to chronicle them. Since the time of Bruce and Salt good authoritative lists of the kings of this period have become available, and from among these the following names are derived. The list A is taken from Brit. Mus. MS. Oriental No. 821, fol. 36a, and the list B from the *History of the Kings of Dabra Yāhānes*, edited by Conti Rossini (*Ricordi*, Asmara, 1903).

A	B
1 'Ēbna Ḥakīm አብነ፡ ሐኪም፡	1 Menilek ምኒልክ፡ reigned 15 years
2 Tōmās ቶማስ፡	2 Tōmāy ቶማይ፡ or 'Ab-Rākīd አብ፡ ራኪድ፡ reigned 15 years
3 Zagdūr ዘገዱር፡	3 Zagdūru ዘገዱሩ፡
4 'Aksūmāy አክሱማይ፡	4 'Aksūmāy አክሱማይ፡
5 'Awsāyō አውሳዮ፡	5 'Awsābyōs አውሳብዮስ፡
6 Taḥawāsyā ተሐዋስያ፡	6 Ḥandar ሐንደር፡
7 'Abrālyūs አብራላዩስ፡	7 Tā'āsyā ታአስያ፡
8 Warada Ḍaḥāy ወረደ፡	8 Walda Meḥrat ወልደ፡
ፀሓይ፡	ምሕረት፡
9 Ḥandadyō ሐንደድዮ፡	9 Warada Ḍaḥāy ወረደ፡ ፀሓይ፡

# ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

A	B
10 Warada Nagāsha ወረደ፡ነጋሽ፡	10 'Asānyā አሳንያ፡
11 'Awesyā አውስያ፡	11 Īlālyōs ኢላሊዮስ፡
12 'Ēlālyōn ኤላሊዮን፡	12 Tōmā Seyōn ቶማ፡ደዮን፡
13 Tōmās Daḥay ቶማስ፡ዐሐይ፡	13 Bā'ōs ባአስ፡
14 Bāsyō ባስዮ፡	14 'Awestet አውስጥጥ፡
15 'Aweቴቴ አውጥጥ፡	15 Zawārē Nebrat ዘዋሬ፡ ንብረት፡
16 Zawārī Nebrat ዘዋሪ፡ንብረት፡	16 Safāy ሰፋይ፡
17 Safāy ሰፋይ፡	17 Ramḥay ረምሃይ፡
18 Ramḥay ረምሐይ፡	18 Safalyā ሰፈላያ፡
19 Ḥandū ሐንዱ፡	19 'Ēngēleb አንጌልብ፡
20 Safēlyā ሰፈላያ፡	20 Gawras ገውረስ፡
21 Aglebēl አግልቤል፡	21 Bāwel ባውል፡
22 Bawāwel ባዋውል፡	22 Hendēn ሐንደን፡
23 Bawarīs ባወሪስ፡	23 Māḥasī ማሐሲ፡
24 Maḥasē መሐሴ፡	24 Lākā ላካ፡
25 Nālkē ናልኬ፡	25 Bāzēn ባዜን፡
26 Tāzēn ታዜን፡	In the 8th year of his reign Christ was born.
In the 8th year of his reign Christ was born.	

## THE KINGS FROM BĀZĒN TO 'ABREHĀ (FROM THE NATIVITY TO B.C. 333)

BRUCE'S LIST (*Travels*, II. 141) = LIST IN BRIT. MUS. MS. OR. 821

1 Bāzēn	1 Tāzēn ( <i>sic</i> ) ታዜን፡
2 Tzenaf Segued	2 Ṣenfa 'Ar'ad ጽንፈ፡አርዕድ፡
3 Garima Asferi	3 Bāḥer [A]sgad ባሕር፡አሰገድ፡
4 Saraada	4 Germā 'Asfarē ግርማ፡አሰፈሬ፡
5 Tzion	5 Sharguāy ሠርጎይ፡
6 Sargai	6 Zar'ay ዘርአይ፡
7 Bagamai	7 Sabe' 'Asgad ሰብአ፡አሰገድ፡
8 Jan Segued	8 Ṣeyōn Gezā ጽዮን፡ግዛ፡
9 Tzion Heges	9 'Agdūr አግዲር፡
10 Moal Genha	10 Ṣenfa 'Ar'ad ጽንፈ፡አርዕድ፡
11 Saif Araad	11 'Abrehā and 'Aṣbeḥa አብርሃ፡ ወአጽብሐ፡
12 Agedar	
13 Abreha and Atzbeha	

# THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

The TĀRIK published by Conti Rossini gives the following variant:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>1 Bāzēn ባዜን፣</p> <p>2 Germā Sōr ግርማ፣ ሶር፣<br/>whose throne name was<br/>Kālēb ካሌብ፣</p> <p>3 Sharguāy ሠርጋይ፣</p> <p>4 Zarāy ዘራይ፣</p> <p>5 Seyōn Gezā ጸዮን፣ ግዛ፣</p> | <p>6 Sabe' 'Asgad ሰብአ፣ አስግድ፣</p> <p>7 'Ahendir አከንዲር፣</p> <p>8 Tāzēr ታዜር፣ whose throne<br/>name was Sayfa 'Ar'ad<br/>ሰይፈ፣ አርአድ፣</p> <p>9 'Abrehā and 'Aṣbeḥa</p> |
|---|--|

SALT'S LIST (*Voyage*, p. 401)

LIST IN BRIT. MUS. OR. 821,  
fol. 28 b

	Years		Years
1 Za Senatu	26	1 Za Sartu ዘሰርጦ፣	26
2 Za Les	10	2 Za L'as ዘለአስ፣	10
3 Za Masenh	6	3 Za Mūsēneh ዘሙሴንሕ፣	6
4 Za Sutuwa	9	4 [Za] Sheṭeṭ [ዘ]ሥጥጥ፣	9
5 Za Adgaba	10.6m.	5 Za 'Adgasā ዘአድግሳ፣	16.6m.
6 Za Agba	6m.	6 Za 'Agābōs ዘአጋቦስ፣	6m.
7 Za Malis	6	7 Za Malik ዘመሊክ፣	4 (?)
8 Za Hakale	13	8 Za Ḥaḳlī ዘሓቅሊ፣	13
9 Za Demahé	10	9 Za Demāḥē ዘደማሔ፣	10
10 Za Awtet	2	10 Za 'Awṭet ዘአውጥጥ፣	2
11 Za Elawda	30	11 Za El-'Āwedā ዘአለ፣ ዓውዳ፣	30
12 Za Zigen and Rema	40	12 Bezṭā and Zemārē ብዝጣ፣ ወዝማሬ፣	20 [each?]
13 Za Gafale	1	13 Za Gafalī ዘገራሊ	1
14 Za Baesi serk	4	14 Za Be'sī Sarḳ ዘብእሲ፣ ሰርቅ፣	4
15 Za Elasguaga	76	15 Za Ela-Azgwāgwā ዘአለ፣ አዝጓጓ፣	76
16 El Herka	21	16 [Za] Ela-Ḥerkā [ዘ]አለ፣ ሕርካ፣	21

# ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

SALT'S LIST (*Voyage*, p. 401)  
(*continued*)

LIST IN BRIT. MUS. OR. 821,  
fol. 28 *b* (*continued*)

	Years		Years
17 Za Baesi tsawera	1	17 Za Be'si Şāwēzā ዘብ ኢሲ፡ፃዌዛ፡	1
18 Za Wakena	2 days	18 Za Waknā ዘወክና፡	2 days
19 Za Hadus	4m.	19 Za Ḥadāwēsā ዘሐዳ ውሳ፡	2m.
20 El Segel	2	20 Za Ela-Sagal ዘኢላ ሰገላ፡	3
21 El Asfeh	14	21 Za Ela 'Asfehā ዘኢላ ኢስፍሐ	10
22 El Tsegaba	23	22 Za Ela Şegāb ዘኢላ ጽጋብ፡	23
23 El Semera	3	23 Za Ela Samrā ዘኢላ ሰምራ፡	3
24 El Abreha or Aizana and	26. 6m.	24 Za Ela.....	16
25 El Atzbeha or Saizana }		25 Za Ela Eskendi ዘኢላ ኢስከንዲ፡	36
26 El Aiba	16	26 Za Ela Şaḥam ዘኢላ ጸሐም፡	9
27 El Iskandi	36	27 Za Ela Sān ዘኢላ፡ሳን፡	13
28 El Tshemo	9	28 Za Ela 'Aygā ዘኢላ አይጋ፡	18
29 El San	13	29 Za Ela 'Amidā ዘኢላ አሚዳ፡	30. 8m.
30 El Aiga	18	30 Za Ela 'Aḥyawā ዘኢላ አሕየዋ፡	3
31 El Ameda	40. 8m.	31 Za Ela ዘኢላ 'Arbeḥa አርብሐ፡	26. 6m.
32 El Ahiawya	3	32 Za Ela ዘኢላ 'Aṣbeḥa ወአጽ ብሐ፡	
		whose mother was 'Eguālā 'Anbasā ኢግላ፡አንበሳ፡	

# THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

THE KINGS FROM 'ABREHĀ TO DELNA'AD (A.D. 333—960)

Bruce (*Travels*, II. 141) and Salt (*Voyage*, p. 427) give the following lists:

BRUCE	SALT
1 Asfeha	1 Ameda
2 Arphad	2 Tazena
3 Amzi	3 Caleb
4 Araad	4 Guebra Mascāl
5 Saladoba	5 Constantinus
6 Alamida	6 Wusen Segued
7 Tezhana	7 Fré Sennai
8 Caleb (A.D. 522)	8 Adreraz
9 Guebra Maskal	9 Akul Woodem
10 Constantine	10 Grim Sofer
11 Bazzar	11 Zergāz
12 Azbeha	12 Degna Michael
13 Armaha	13 Bakr-Akla
14 Jan Asfeha	14 Gouma
15 Jan Segued	15 Asgoungūm
16 Fere Sanai	16 Let-um
17 Aderaaz	17 Thala-tum
18 Aizor	18 Woddo Gúsh
19 Del Naad (A.D. 960)	19 Iזור
	20 Didum
	21 Woodm asfar
	22 Armah
	23 Degna Jan
	24 Ambasa Woodim
	25 Dilnaad

The first of the following list (A) is taken from Brit. Mus. MS. Or. 821, and agrees substantially with that given in the Chronicle published by Basset (*Études*, p. 97 f.), and the second from the TĀRIK published by Conti Rossini.

A	B
'Abrehā አብርሃ፡	'Aṣbeha አጽብሐ፡
'Asfeh አስፍሕ፡	'Asfeh አስፍሐ፡
'Arfed አርፍድ፡	'Arfasked አርፋስካድ፡

# ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

A	B
'Amsē አምሴ፡	'Amsē አምሴ፡
Saladōbā ሰለአዶባ፡	'Alādēb አላድብ፡
'Al-'Āmēdā አል'ሜዳ፡	'Almēdā አልሜዳ፡
Tāzēnā ታዜና፡	Tāzēnā ታዜና፡
Kālēb ካሌብ፡	Kālēb ካሌብ፡ 40 years
Gabra Maskal ገብረ፡ መስቀል፡	Gabra Maskal ገብረ፡ መስቀል፡ 40 years
Kuostantīnōs ቄስጦንጢኖስ፡	Yesḥaḳ ይስሐቅ፡ (Constantine)
Wasan Sagad ወሰን፡ ሰገድ፡	Ferē Shanāya ፍሬ፡ ወናይ፡
Ferē Shanāy ፍሬ፡ ወናይ፡	Wasan Sagad ወሰን፡ ሰገድ፡
'Adre'az አድረአዝ፡	Degnā Mikāēl ድግና፡ ሚካኤል፡
Akla Wedem አክለ፡ ወድም፡	Derāz ድራዝ፡
Germā Safar ግርማ፡ ሰፈር፡	Degzān ድግዛን፡
Zergāz ዝርጋዝ፡	Germā Sōr ግርማ፡ ሶር፡
Degnā Mikāēl ድግና፡ ሚካኤል፡	'Akāla Wedem አክለ፡ ወድም፡
Bāḥer Īklā ባሕር፡ ኢክላ፡	Bāḥra 'Ēkālā ባሕራ፡ ኤክላ፡
Gūm ጉም፡	Gūm ጉም፡
'Asguōmgūm አስጉምጉም፡	'Ashāgūm አሻጉም፡
Letem ለትም፡	Latem ለትም፡
Talātem ተላትም፡	Talātem ተላትም፡
'Odā Sāsa ዓዳ፡ ሳሸ፡	'Adḥsha አድሻሸ፡
'Ayzūr አይሁር፡	'Ayzūr አይሁር፡ reigned ½ a day
Dedem ድድም፡	'Awdamdēm አውድም ድም፡
Wededem ወድድም፡	Wedem Masferē ወድም፡ መስ ፍሬ፡
Wedem 'Asfarē ወድም፡ አስፈሬ፡	
Armāḥ አርማሕ፡	'Armāḥ አርማሕ፡
Degnā Jān ድግና፡ ገርን፡	Degjān ድግዣን፡
'Anbasa Wedem አንበሳ፡ ወድም፡	'Anbasā Wedem አንበሳ፡ ወድም፡
Delnā'ad ድልናአድ፡	Delnā'ad ድልናዓድ፡ he reigned 40 years



# THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

## THE ZĀGWĒ

About the middle of the 10th century, whilst Delna'ad was reigning, a religious revolution broke out in Abyssinia, with far-reaching consequences. The authors of the revolution were the Falāshas, who were of Jewish origin and practised Judaism, and the Zāgwē, a tribe or section of the Agāws, who were Christians. The Abyssinian Chronicles make no mention of any revolution, but the King Lists say that after Delna'ad, the kingdom passed to "another people who were not of the tribe of Israel" **ለካልኣ ሕዝብ ፡ አለ ፡ ኢኮኑ ፡ አምነገደ ፡ አስራኤል**. These successors of Delna'ad are everywhere in the Chronicles called "Zāgwē," or "Zāgwā," and modern historians have written the most strange and contradictory things about them. The traditions recorded by Bruce (*Travels*, II. p. 167) state that the leader of the revolution was a princess called Judith (some say Esther, and the natives called her 'Ēsāt **አሳት** i.e. "Fire"), who was the wife of the governor of the district of Bugna near Lāstā. She determined to overthrow the Christian Religion, and with it Delna'ad, who was descended from the Queen of Sheba and King Solomon, and to set her son on the throne instead of Delna'ad who was then an infant. She caused her emissaries to take the guardians of the rock of Dāmō, where the royal princes were kept shut up, by surprise, and it is said that she murdered 400 of them. Some loyal subjects took the child Delna'ad, the only survivor of his race, to Shoa, where he was received kindly and taken under the protection of the principal chiefs of that province. Judith seized the throne and reigned for 40 years, during which time she laid waste Aksūm, and covered the whole country with the ruins of churches and monasteries. The Abyssinians agree that the whole period of her reign was "one scene of murder, violence and oppression." On the death of Judith the throne passed to her descendants, and these were kinsmen of the group of kings who succeeded them, and were members of a noble family of Lāstā. Among the last named were Christian kings like Lālībalā, whose name is, and always has been, held in great veneration throughout the country, but they were not of the race of Solomon, and the Abyssinian Annals do not include them among the rightful kings of the country. The Chronicles say the

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

Zāgwē kings were eleven in number, but they omit any mention of Judith, and that their rule lasted for a period of 354 years. Bruce was so much troubled by the difference in the characters and deeds of earlier and later Zāgwē kings that he divided them into two groups, one containing five Jewish, or pagan kings, the descendants of Judith, and the other six Christian kings, from a noble family of Lāstā. As eleven kings are said to have reigned 354 years, the average length of each king's reign was a little over 32 years, which is far too high. But the whole period of the Zāgwē is, as Bruce said, "involved in darkness."

Such is the story of Queen Judith and her evil deeds which Bruce was told by the Abyssinians towards the close of the 18th century. He had doubts about its authenticity, but he accepted it on the whole. His belief was not influenced by what European authors might say or had said about it, for they could have had no other authorities than those which he had seen; therefore any difference between their version and his must be the "fruit of idle imagination, and ill-founded conjectures of their own." Salt (*Voyage*, p. 472) recorded the existence of the woman Gudīt who overthrew the reigning dynasty and destroyed Aksūm, and subsequent writers were for many years content to follow Bruce and Salt. De Castro (*Nella Terra dei Negus*, I. p. 100) thinks that Gudīt (Giuditta) overthrew the Aksūmite dynasty, and formed a new kingdom, probably Jewish, in Lāstā. And Morié (*Histoire*, II. p. 181) states boldly that she was a Falāsha or Jewish queen, and that she and her daughter Judith II formed the Falāsha Dynasty which lasted from 937-977. Further, that she removed the seat of government to Lāstā, that she destroyed Aksūm, and that her "bloody persecutions of the Christians," and the supporters of the legitimate dynasty have stirred up all Abyssinia against her, Morié says that Judith II was called Terda'e Gabaz, but Mariano Vittorio only mentions one Judith, and it is to her that he gives the name Terda'e Gabaz.

We may now consider what evidence exists which would support or modify the above story. Renaudot translates (*Hist. Pat. Alex.*, Paris, 1713, p. 381) a passage from the work of an Arab writer who mentions a queen who ruled over Ethiopia in the 10th century. This passage is found in a letter which was sent by

## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

the king of Abyssinia to George of Nubia, asking him to use his influence with Philotheus, Patriarch of Alexandria (981-1002), so that he might send an Abūna to his country, which had been without one for a long time. And the king goes on to speak of a queen who has invaded the country and is burning the towns and destroying the churches, and has driven the king from one place to another. For the Arabic text see Guidi, *Giornale della Soc. Asiat. Italiana*, tom. III. pp. 164-181. No name is given to this queen, but she is described as a queen who follows the Jewish religion *dīn al-Yahūdīyah*. The early readers of the Arabic text blundered because these two words were indistinctly written, and *Yahūdīyah* suggested to them the name Judith, which they proceeded to bestow upon the queen. Whether the queen was a Jewess or not cannot be verified, but she was certainly no Christian, for in another passage in the letter quoted by Conti Rossini (*Sulla Dinastia Zagwè*, Rome, 1897) the king says that he is afraid that the Christian Religion *dīn Naṣrānīyah* will be rooted out and destroyed among them. From these two passages we may conclude that the queen was a pagan and that she was not called Judith. In answer to the king's demand for an Abūna the Patriarch sent one Daniel, and after the arrival of this ecclesiastic the Arabic text says that the "government of this woman came to an end." But Perruchon thinks (*Vie de Lalibala*, Paris, 1892, p. xii), and Rossini agrees with him (*Sulla Dinastia Zagwè*), that the words which Guidi emended into *dīn al-Yahūdīyah* should be read *Bani al-Haghwiyah*, and would translate "Queen of the sons of the Haghwiyah," i.e. the original inhabitants of the country, or the Agāw. Rossini clinches the matter by pointing out that the word Haghwiyah would be correctly transcribed in Ethiopic letters by ሃጌ፡ Hāgwā, and that the scribe confusing ሃ with ዘ, i.e. Hā with Zā, wrote ዘጌ፡ Zāgwā instead of Hāgwā. As for the name of the queen the Arabic text gives it as حوآن, i.e. "Eve." We are now pretty certain that the queen was called Eve, and that she was probably a pagan, and in the eyes of the king of Abyssinia a heretic, and that she belonged to the great Zāgwā tribe of the Agāw. If she had any religion at all it was almost certainly Jewish in character. Halévy points out that all the Zāgwē princes save one bore Christian names (*Revue des Études Juives*, 1889, p. 457).

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

Returning to Bruce's narrative (*Travels*, II. p. 173) we are told that whilst the Zāgwē were reigning at Lāstā the line of Solomon had been continued at Shoa from Delna'ad who had escaped the massacre of princes at Dāmō under Judith. Now one of the last Zāgwē kings was Na'akueto La'ab, a just and peaceable prince, and the famous ascetic Takla Hāymānōt proposed to him that he should abdicate in favour of Yekuenō 'Amlāk, a prince of Shoa of the Solomonic line. The Zāgwē king agreed to the proposal and a treaty was drawn up to this effect with the following stipulations:

I. That Na'akueto La'ab should resign in favour of Yekuenō 'Amlāk.

II. That in return estates in Lāstā were to be transferred to him and his heirs for ever; that his titles should be King of Lāstā and King of Zāgwē; that he should be free from tax, service, homage, and demands of all kinds, and his descendants likewise; that he should sit on a gold stool equal in size to that of the king of Abyssinia; that the globes of his flags and the points of the spears of his bodyguard should be of silver; and that he should have two silver kettledrums as marks of his sovereignty.

III. That one-third of the kingdom should be ceded absolutely to the Abūna for the maintenance of his state and dignity, and the support of the churches and clergy, monasteries and monks. The year when this arrangement was made was the first of the "Era of Separation."

IV. That no native Abyssinian should thereafter be chosen as Abūna, even though he was chosen by the Patriarch of the Copts and sent to Abyssinia from Cairo. If the man chosen was a foreigner he would have to become naturalized.

Wonderful to relate this treaty was faithfully observed for nearly 500 years, but it was broken in 1768 during the war of Bēgamder by Allo Fāfil, who murdered treacherously the prince of the Zāgwē. The gift of one-third of the country to the Abūna has been diminished from time to time under various pretexts of the kings.

A little light is thrown on the history of the period by the following extract from the *TĀRIK* of Dabra Lībānōs (ed. Rossini, p. 5): "Now Delna'ad was troubled by his daughter, because his faithful (or, believing) ones told him that she would seize his kingdom. And the king said, 'If she would seize my kingdom cast her

## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

into the sea'; and they cast her into the sea placed in a wooden chest. And there was a young man, a servant of the king, of the men of the city of Ḥamāsēn; and that young man whose name was Takla Hāymānōt took out that maiden secretly (?). And he said to the king, 'O my Lord, swear to me that thou wilt fulfil for me my heart's desire'; and the king swore to Takla Hāymānōt that he would do what he wanted done. And after the king had sworn to him Takla Hāymānōt said to him, 'Give me thy daughter.' And the king was sorry both for the sake of his oath and because of that daughter, and he gave her to him with great difficulty (*i.e.* reluctance), and he set the young man over this city. And as Takla Hāymānōt was walking through the city over which he had been appointed, all the soldiers of the king followed him, for the king was angry and had given them orders to seize Takla Hāymānōt, and when they were unable to do so, the king himself went to fight with him. And Takla Hāymānōt killed Delnā'ad and seized the kingdom, and he took the kingdom of Israel.

Now the name of Takla Hāymānōt as king was 'Zawēgē.' And he begot three men children and one girl. The name of one boy was Janseyūm, of another Germāseyūm, of the third Gēmpāwedamō, and the name of the girl was Terde'ana Gabaz ተርድአናገባዝ. Takla Hāymānōt reigned 40 years, Janseyūm reigned 40 years, Germāseyūm reigned 40 years, Gēmpāwedamō reigned 40 years, Yemrehā reigned 40 years, Gabra Māryām reigned 40 years, Lālibalā reigned 40 years, Na'akueto La'ab reigned 40 years, Yetbāarak reigned 9 years. These are they who reigned righteously. The period during which these nine reigned was 343 ፫፻፵፫ years. And Lālibalā said unto Maskaḷ Kebrā his wife, 'Go thou to the country of Ḥamāsēn.' And she went, taking her child Tasfā İyāsūs Waldā Dewabana'ad (?) to Yekuenō 'Amlāk. And the kingdom of Israel returned to Yekuenō 'Amlāk, who reigned 15 years."

According to this narrative the princess who conspired against Delna'ad was his own daughter whom, much against his will, he gave to one of his soldiers or servants called Takla Hāymānōt to wife. Takla Hāymānōt was not an Israelite, and he only obtained the kingdom after killing his father-in-law. The name of the princess he married is not given, but his daughter was called Terde'ana-Gabaz. As his royal name he adopted "Zawēgē," and

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

this became the name of his dynasty, which, however, only contained *nine* kings, and not eleven as the King Lists say. We may note that in one of the Paris MSS. (No. 64) the Zāgwē are said to have been *five* in number, and that the period of their rule began in 1145 or 1147, and ended in 1268 or 1270. The princess was a Christian and not a pagan like the alleged Judith, or Eve, and her descendants would probably have Christian sympathies, though their father was no Israelite. Her sons reigned and she undoubtedly helped to found a dynasty, if the story told above is to be believed. In it we have no mention of the burning of towns and churches, and the destruction of Aksūm, and nothing is said about a treaty between the last or last but one of the Zāgwē and Yekuenō 'Amlāk. Still both traditions are found in the Ethiopic manuscripts, and who is to say which of the two more nearly represents the truth?

Whilst the Zāgwē kings were reigning at Lāstā Delna'ad and his successors were reigning at Shoa; the names of the kings of the contemporaneous dynasties are as follows:

THE ZĀGWĒ (Bruce, <i>Travels</i> , II. p. 45)	KINGS AT SHOA (Basset, <i>Études</i> , p. 98)
PAGANS (?)	
Totadem	Māhbara Wedem ግሀበረ-ወ-ደም፣
Jan Shum	Agbēa Şeyōn
Garima Shum	Şenfa 'Ar'ad ጽንፈ-አርአድ፣
Harbai	Nagāsha Zāīē ነጋሸዛሬ፣
Marari	'Asfeh አስፍክ፣
CHRISTIANS	
Tecla Haimanout	Yā'akōb ያዕቆብ፣
Kedus Harbé	Bāhr 'Asgād ባሕር-አስጋድ፣
Itibarek	'Edēm 'Asgād አደም-አስጋድ፣
Lalibala	Yekūnō 'Amlāk ይኩኖ-አምላክ፣ <sup>1</sup>
Imeranha Christos	
Naacueto Laab	

<sup>1</sup> In the TĀRĪK of Dabra Libānōs we have 1 ግሀበረ-ወ-ደም፣ 2 አስፋክ፣ 3 ያዕቆብ፣ 4 ነጋሸደሬ፣ 5 ጽንፈ-አርአድ፣ 6 አወ-ደ-ማ-ሰገድ፣ 7 ድልናድ-ጀተ፣

# THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

Then follows the remark "These are the 44 ሻወሻ kings (*i.e.* the whole list of the Shoa kings), and one woman whose name was Masōba Warḳ መሶባ፡ወርቅ፡."

## THE ZĀGWĒ

I	Years	2	Years
BRIT. MUS. MS. OR. 821, fol. 28 <i>b</i>		THE TĀRIK OF DABRA LĪBĀNŌS	
Takla Hāymānōt ትክለ፡ሃይማኖት፡	3	ትክለ፡ሃይማኖት፡	40
Ṭaṭadem ጠጠድም፡	40		
Jān Sheyūm ገንገ፡ሥዩም፡	40	ገንገድም፡	40
Germā Sheyūm ግርማ፡ሥዩም፡	40	ግርማድም፡	40
Yemrehna Krestōs ይምርህ፡ክርስቶስ፡	40	ይምእ፡ውድም፡	40
Ḳedūs Ḥarbē ቅዱስ፡ሐርቤ፡	40	ይምርሃ፡	40
Lālībalā ላሊበላ፡	40	ገብረ፡ማርያም፡	40
Na'akueto La'ab ነአኩቶ፡ለአብ፡	48	ላሊበላ፡	40
Yetbāarak ይትባረክ፡	40	ነአኩቶ፡ለአብ፡	40
Mayrārī መይራሪ፡	15	ይትባረክ፡	9
Ḥarbay ሐርባይ፡	8	These are they who reigned righteously.	
The total duration of their reigns was 354 years, and they were eleven in number.		The period during which these nine reigned was 343 ( <i>sic</i> ) ፫፻፵፫፡ years.	

It will be seen that the list in the TĀRIK omits Ṭatadem, Ḳedūs Ḥarbē, Mayrārī and Ḥarbay, and inserts Gēmpāwedem and Gabra Maryām.

The reader has now before him a list of the kings of Abyssinia who reigned from B.C. 5500 to A.D. 1268 or 1270. The various sections of this list have been taken from the list which is found in the Bodleian MS. No. xxvi, fol. 100, and which agrees with the lists given in Basset's *Études*, and in the Bodleian MSS. Nos. xxviii and xxix, and the Bibl. Nat. MS. No. 141, and in the Brit. Mus. MS. No. 821, fol. 36. In the Bodleian MS. No. xxvi, fol. 90, there is another list which professes to give a list of the kings of Aksūm, and which agrees with the lists found in Brit. Mus. MS. fol. 28, the Bibl. Nat. MS. No. 143, the d'Abbadie MS. No. 118. The total

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

number of the names given in the lists as reigning between B.C. 5500 and A.D. 1268 is less than 200; therefore each king reigned on an average 34 years, which is impossible. And scores of kings must have reigned besides these. It may be that the lists only contain the names of the kings who were descended from the Hebrews, and that the scribes made no attempt to record the names of those who were of purely native, unmixed origin. Racial and religious feeling was always very intense in Abyssinia. The First period of Abyssinian History (B.C. 5500—B.C. 1000) is mythical; the Second period (B.C. 1000 to the Nativity) is traditional, or legendary; the Third period (the Nativity to A.D. 1268) is semi-historical; and Abyssinian History only begins with the accession of Yekūnō 'Amlāk in 1268 or 1270. All Abyssinian tradition, and the most ancient manuscripts call him the "restorer" of the Solomonic dynasty. But Conti Rossini, one of the first authorities on Abyssinia and her languages and history, regards this dynasty as comparatively modern. He says, "In realtà, la dinastia salomonien è recente: essa non rimonta oltre la seconda metà del secolo XIII...in lui devesi ravvisare il fondatore della dinastia" (*Sulla Dinastia*, p. 11). The names of the kings who reigned from A.D. 1268 to the present time are given each at the head of the section devoted to him in the historical summary in the following pages.

### THE LEGENDARY HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

According to a tradition current everywhere in Abyssinia and universally accepted, Abyssinian History begins with the founding of the city of Aksūm. One form of the tradition says that Malakyā 'Aksūm, the son of 'Aksūmāwī, the grandson of Aethiopia (after whom the country took its name), the great-grandson of Kūsh, and the great-great-grandson of Noah, had six sons, and that they were the "fathers of Aksūm," whatever that may mean. Their names were Sūm, Nafās, Bag'ō, Kūdūkī, 'Akhōrō and Farshebā, and each settled down there on his own land. Hence it was believed that Aksūm was founded within a century after the Flood, and the tradition indicates that the town, even at that early period, had a special significance for the Abyssinians. How and why it acquired this significance it is impossible to say, but there must have been



## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

some good reason for it. Some time later the town acquired special importance as the home of 'Angabō, who slew in it the dragon Waināba, that came there from Tambēn to the south of Aksūm, and buried him there, the grave of the monster being known at the present day. 'Angabō and his descendants reigned there for two hundred years, among them being Mākēdā, the "Queen of the South," who visited Solomon in Jerusalem. From the "Book of Aksūm" much is to be learnt concerning the history and importance of the city in later times. Bruce mentions this work in his *Travels*, e.g. I. p. 120, but the "Book of Axum" to which he refers is really the *KEBRA NAGAST*, or the "Book of the Glory of Kings," and it is very doubtful if he ever saw or heard of the Book now to be described. The "Maṣḥafa 'Aksūm" is a large work which contains a description of the city of Aksūm and its churches, obelisks, wells, etc., and then goes on to speak of the Cathedral, and the building of it, and its glories, and adds a list of its endowments made by kings and others, and its estates, properties, etc. The Ethiopic texts have been edited, with French translations, by Conti Rossini, "*Liber Axumae*," in *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium* (Series Altera, tom. VIII. Paris, 1909-10). According to this work the "Church of our Mother Syon," the Cathedral of Aksūm, was first built at Māzeber, where the tomb of Aethiopsis was, and it remained there for a long time. When Mākēdā came to the throne, she made many changes and built (*i.e.* rebuilt) the town in the territory of 'Āsebā ጸሐጵ, and it was for this reason that the Book (*i.e.* Bible) calls her "Queen of Sābā," and also "Queen of 'Azēb" (*i.e.* South). The visit of Mākēdā to Solomon has already been described (see p. 196) and the circumstances by which her son 'Ēbna Ḥakīm, or Menyelek (I) became king of Abyssinia may now be summarized.

When the prince was twelve years old he asked his friends who his father was, and they told him Solomon. He asked his mother the same question several times, and as the result of his importunity she admitted the fact, but told him Solomon's country was a long way off, and travelling thither difficult, and suggested to him that he was better where he was. Ten years later, when he had grown into a handsome man, and had become a skilled horseman and bold hunter of wild beasts, he announced to his mother that he was going to see his father Solomon. Thereupon Mākēdā summoned

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

Tāmṛīn, her chief man of affairs, and told him to take her son to Jerusalem to see the king and to bring him back to rule over the land. She had decided to abolish the matriarchate, and that henceforward her son and his seed after him should be the kings of her country. She had also put down idolatry and suppressed the art of the diviners, and commanded her son to root out any man who worshipped the heavenly bodies and practised divination. But she coveted the possession of the fringes of the Ark of the Covenant in Jerusalem. As her son was starting on his journey she took him aside, and gave him the ring which Solomon had taken from his little finger and given to her, so that the king might have no doubt about the young man being his son.

Then 'Ēbna Ḥakīm set out on his journey and arrived in Gāzā, and the people knew at once from his form and features that he was the son of Solomon; some went so far as to say that he was Solomon himself, and sent messengers to find out whether the king was in Jerusalem or not. Finding him there they reported to him that a merchant had arrived in Gāzā who was the image and counterpart of himself. In answer Solomon sent off a party to bring the merchant to him, and when they returned with him, and brought him into the royal presence, the king knew at once that the young man was his son. And he embraced him and kissed him on his forehead and mouth and eyes, and said, "He is handsomer than I am, and his form and stature are those of David, my father, in his early manhood." Then he arrayed him in gorgeous apparel, and gave him a belt of gold and set a crown on his head, and a ring on his finger, and seated him with him on the throne as his equal. And the people said, "He is an Israelite of the seed of David, being fashioned perfectly in the likeness of his father's form and appearance; we are his servants, and he shall be our king." Then 'Ēbna Ḥakīm gave to Solomon the ring which he had brought from his mother, and asked in return for a portion of the fringe of the covering of the Ark of the Covenant so that the Mākēdā and her subjects might worship it for ever. After a time Tāmṛīn took a message to Solomon from Mākēdā, saying, "Take the young man, anoint him, consecrate him, bless him, and send him away in peace." But to send him back to his mother was not Solomon's intention, and he took every opportunity of impressing upon him that it was

## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

better for him to live with him in the country where the Tabernacle of the Law of God was than in Sheba; and he arrayed him in splendid apparel of gold and silver, and sent him dainty meats morning and evening. Now the luxury with which Solomon surrounded him, and the life in Jerusalem did not appeal to 'Ĕbna Ḥakīm, and he told Solomon that he wanted to get back to the mountains of the land of his mother, and he repeated his petition for a gift of a piece of the fringe of the covering of the Ark of the Covenant. In vain Solomon remonstrated with him, and promised him the kingdom of Israel after his own death, for his son replied, "My lord, it is impossible for me to abandon my country and my mother; I swore to her by her breasts that I would return to her quickly, and that I would not marry a wife here." When Solomon realized how inflexible was his son's determination, he summoned his councillors and confessed to them that he could not persuade his son to remain in Jerusalem. He then proposed to them to make 'Ĕbna Ḥakīm king of Ethiopia, and that each of them should send his eldest son with him to serve him in that country in the same way that their fathers served Solomon in Jerusalem. And to this the councillors agreed.

Then they took 'Ĕbna Ḥakīm into the Holy of Holies, and he laid his hands on the horns of the altar, and Zadok the priest, assisted by Joas (Benaiah) anointed him king, and bestowed upon him the name of David. And they set the young man on Solomon's mule, and he rode about the city amid the blowing of horns, the beating of drums, the twanging of harps, and the pipings of flutes and pipes. Cries of joy and gladness filled the air everywhere, and the people cried out to him "Bāḥ," *i.e.* "Hail! Long Life." A little later Zadok instructed him in the way in which he should rule his kingdom, and imparted to him a summary of the Religious, Moral and Civil Law of Israel. And Solomon gave to his son horses and chariots, camels, mules, wagons, gold and silver, byssus and purple, gems, pearls, and semi-precious stones, and in fact everything necessary for the founding of Israel's new kingdom in Ethiopia. And the councillors prepared their eldest sons for their journey to Ethiopia, but though they pretended to Solomon that they were doing it with good will, they cursed him for robbing them of their sons. The names of the young noblemen who were selected to go

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

with 'Ēbna ʾIakīm, or David II, are given in full in the *KEBRA NAGAST*, § 43. (Budge, *Queen of Sheba*, p. 61.)

### HOW 'ĒBNA HAKĪM STOLE THE ARK OF THE COVENANT

Whilst preparations for the departure of 'Ēbna Hakīm were being carried on hurriedly, the young nobles who were to leave their native land met together to discuss their positions and their future, which they regarded with foreboding and dismay, for it was clear to them that they were going into perpetual exile. Most of all they dreaded leaving the city where dwelt the Ark of the Covenant, and the Shrine of Zion, the veritable abode of God Himself, and the going to a country where there was no God. After much discussion Azarias, the son of Zadok the priest, having sworn all his fellow emigrants to the greatest secrecy, said to them, "Let us take with us our Lady Zion, *i.e.* the Ark of the Covenant, when we depart. How shall we take Her? I will show you how to do this. If you adopt my plan, and will carry it out, we shall be able to take our Lady with us. If they find out what we are doing, and slay us, let us not trouble about that, for we shall die for our Lady." Azarias then collected money from his companions, and went to a carpenter and told him to make him planks for a framework of good wood of exactly the same size as the Ark of the Covenant, saying that he intended to use it as a raft should the vessel they were going to sail in sink. When the carpenter brought the planks for the framework to Azarias he took them to the sanctuary of Zion and hid them under the covering of the Ark. Acting under the instruction of an angel who appeared to him that night, he told 'Ēbna Hakīm to ask his father's permission to offer up a sacrifice to the Ark, the Lady Zion, before he left Jerusalem. When Solomon heard his son's request he rejoiced, and gave him 100 bulls, 100 oxen, 10,000 sheep, 10,000 goats, and large quantities of bread and flour, and commanded that Azarias should present the offering to the Ark. On the night after the offering was made Azarias, accompanied by the Lord, called his friends, and they took the planks of wood and went into the sanctuary—now they found all the doors unlocked and open—and laid them down by the side of the Ark. Then four of them lifted up the Ark and carried it into the house of Azarias, and hid it in the ground, and set lamps to mark its place, and sacrificed

## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

sheep, and burnt incense to it. Spreading a purple covering over it they left it there hidden for seven days and seven nights. This done Azarias returned to the sanctuary, and he and his companions put together the planks on the place where the Ark had stood, and covered the wooden framework, which was of exactly the same size as the Ark, with the covering which had been on the Ark, and then Azarias having the keys locked all the doors, both the inner and the outer, and he and his friends went to their houses. When everything was ready 'Ēbna Ḥakīm went and bade his father farewell and received his blessing.

Before Azarias and his party set out on the road they set the Ark they had stolen upon a wagon, together with a mass of stores and dirty clothes heaped about it so that the people might not recognize it. Immediately before their departure Solomon, remembering the petition of Mākēdā that a portion of the fringe of the covering of the Ark might be sent to her, told Zadok the priest to go and bring to him the covering that was on the Ark, and to lay on the Ark instead a new covering which he gave him. Zadok went and brought the covering to Solomon, and he gave it to his son, who rejoiced exceedingly. Then the wagons and beasts were loaded up, and 'Ēbna Ḥakīm and his party set out on their journey under divine auspices. Michael the Archangel marched in front, and made a way for them by land and by sea, and his wings screened them from the fierce heat of the sun. Neither man nor beast touched the ground as they travelled, for they and the loaded wagons were lifted bodily into the air, some a span and some a cubit, and through the might of Michael no one suffered from fatigue or from the discomfort which usually accompanies travelling. The party halted at Gāzā, which Solomon had given to Mākēdā when she visited him, and a day later they arrived in Egypt, having travelled in one day the distance which caravans took thirteen days to cover. There Azarias and his fellow-conspirators revealed to 'Ēbna Ḥakīm the fact that they had stolen the Ark of the Covenant and had it with them there. They told him that it could not be sent back, and that Solomon could not seize it, for the Ark had come of its own free will, which was the Will of God. Then they dressed the Ark for him to see, and thanking God for His mercies he stood up before it, and he capered about before it like a young sheep and a

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

kid of the goats, and his men clapped their hands and pranced about and smote the ground with their feet like "young bulls." Then he saluted the Ark and made obeisance to it, and prophesied before it, and rejoiced greatly. Then Azarias and his men dressed the Ark in purple, and set it upon a wagon, and the trumpeters and drummers and players on pipes made great music, and the people shouted and cried out, and even the Brook of Egypt was astonished at their rejoicings. The cat-headed and dog-headed idols, and the statues of the gods, and the pylons and obelisks fell down and were broken in pieces when Zion, *i.e.* the Ark, approached them.

When the party resumed their journey, men, beasts and wagons were again lifted up above the ground to the height of a cubit, and when they crossed the Red Sea this height was increased to three cubits, and the fish came up out of the sea, and the birds gathered together, and all creatures sang praises to Zion. The party halted opposite Mount Sinai whilst the angels sang praises, and then they passed on through Medyām and came to Bōlōntos, and the frontier of Ethiopia.

Meanwhile Solomon had related to Zadok, the high priest, the dream which he had had on the night of his union with the Queen of Sheba, and when the aged man realized what it portended his knees began to tremble, for he suspected that the Ark had been carried off to Ethiopia. When Solomon asked him if he had looked to see if the Ark was there when he laid the new covering upon it, he said that he had not, and the king told him to go at once and find out. When the high priest entered the sanctuary he found there nothing but the hollow wooden framework which Azarias had substituted for the Ark, and he swooned and fell to the ground. When Solomon heard that the Ark had been stolen he sent out horsemen to pursue Azarias and his party, and in due course he himself with a company of soldiers set out on the road to Ethiopia, and arrived in Egypt. There he questioned the subjects of Pharaoh about his son's party, and they told him that they had left Egypt nine days previously. Disappointed and depressed Solomon returned to Jerusalem, and he and the elders wept bitterly over the loss of the Ark.

When 'Ēbna Ḥākīm arrived off the coast of Ethiopia, he sent

## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

messengers by ship to announce their safe arrival and to report that they had brought with them the Ark of the Covenant, the Lady Zion. The queen sent out a herald to proclaim the glad tidings, and she and her soldiers set out to meet the young king. They marched to the "City of the Government," *i.e.* to Aksūm, and there she made ready to receive him. Her son came by the 'Azyābā Road to Waḡērōm, thence to Masas and Būr, and thence to Aksūm, which the queen herself had built and called DABRA MĀḲĒDĀ. When the queen saw the Ark, shining like the sun in heaven, she bowed her head, beat her breasts, clapped her hands, laughed loudly and danced before it. Tents and pavilions were pitched on the plain, and 32,000 stalled oxen and bulls were slain for the feast which followed. The Ark was set on the fortress of Dabra Māḡēdā, and 1300 men were detailed to keep watch over the pavilion in which it was placed. Three days after the arrival of the Ark Māḡēdā abdicated in favour of her son, and he became the master of 17,700 horses suitable for military purposes, 7700 brood mares, 1000 she-mules, 700 fine mules, robes of honour, gold and silver, and everything of value, and her throne. And she made her nobles swear that they would never set a woman again on the throne of Ethiopia, and that only the seed of David, the son of Solomon, should reign over Ethiopia; and the nobles and governors and councillors swore as she wished. Then the queen made Azarias high priest, and Ēlmēyās keeper of the Law, *i.e.* Zion, and the Ear of the King. And the people abandoned augury, divination, and magic, and augury by birds, and they adopted the worship of the One True God.

Such is the story of the stealing of the Ark of the Covenant by the son of the Queen of Sheba, as told in the KEBRA NAGAST.

### THE REIGN OF 'ĒBNA ḤAKĪM OR MENYELEK I

Though Māḡēdā made the law that in future days no woman should sit on the throne of Abyssinia, and though she handed over the kingdom to 'Ēbna Hakīm on his return from Jerusalem, she did not at once cease to rule the country. On the contrary she built a tent or tabernacle at Aksūm to hold the Ark of the Covenant, and exerted all her authority in suppressing Sabaeism and in establishing the Religion of Israel. Her reign of 25 years was glorious, and

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

the Abyssinians hold that she was the greatest of their queens, and they venerate her as a saint. She is said to have reigned in all fifty years, and to have died about B.C. 955, aged about 60 years. 'Ēbna Ḥakīm was her only child.

On the death of the queen, presumably, Azarias, now high priest of Aksūm and all Abyssinia, decided that the sovereignty of 'Ēbna Ḥakīm must be "renewed," *i.e.* confirmed, and that he must be anointed once more with the oil of sovereignty. The priests assembled in the tabernacle built by Mākḥēdā, and Azarias took the king there and anointed him with the holy oil, and proclaimed him king, and all the people rejoiced greatly. The crowds sang and danced, and played games, and great displays of horsemanship took place, and eating and drinking and feasting at the king's expense went on for some days.

'Ēbna Ḥakīm adopted MENYELEK as his throne name, probably when Azarias anointed him a second time before the Ark of the Covenant, but some think that this name was substituted for 'Ēbna Ḥakīm at a much later date. He at once began to model his government and policy on the lines of the rule of the Hebrews, and he appointed Twelve Judges, according to the number of the tribes of Israel. Azarias drew up a code of laws and regulations based directly upon the laws of Moses, and tradition says that this code was the source of all subsequent legal decisions and ordinances. Menyelek tried to make his kingdom a duplicate of that of king Solomon, and in fact to legislate in every way like his father. Some writers say that he was called the "Wise," but this is a mistake, for 'Ebna Ḥakīm does not mean "wise son," but "son of the wise man," *i.e.* Solomon. According to the KEBRA NAGAST Menyelek engaged in several fierce wars, and was victorious. Three months after his anointing he left the "city of the Government" with the Ark and Mākḥēdā, and marched and encamped at Māya 'Abaw: his soldiers marched before and behind the Ark, and on both sides of it, and as they advanced they sang hymns. The next day the Abyssinians attacked their old enemies in Zāwā and Ḥadeyā, and they slew all the people there and laid waste their lands. Marching on, they came to Gērrā, and they laid waste the city that was inhabited by man-faced vipers, that had the tails of asses attached to their loins. They rested for three months, and



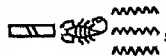
## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

then returned to Aksūm. Then they marched to the country of Sābā, which was usually a march of 30 days, in one day, and laid waste the country of Nōbā (Nubia), and they ravaged Sābā up to the very frontier of Egypt. And the kings of Medyām and Egypt were so terrified at Menyelek's invincible power that they sent gifts to him. A little later he returned to Aksūm, and from there he set out on an expedition against the Indians, and the king of India, fearing his approach, came to the place where Menyelek was, and brought tribute to him and bowed down in homage before him. All these conquests seem to be wholly imaginary, but it is quite possible that Menyelek found himself obliged to give his subjects proof of his bravery in war by embarking on a few raids, from which he brought back loot in the ordinary Abyssinian and Egyptian fashion. Or he may have subsidized certain tribes to attack the hereditary foes of his adopted country, and shared with them the loot, whilst reserving for himself the credit of great "conquests." Instances of such proceedings are not unknown in the Abyssinian Annals. According to the King Lists he reigned 24 years and died about B.C. 930, aged about 50 years. Whether Menyelek married a Hebrew or an Abyssinian woman is not known, but he begot a son called Tōmāi or Tōmās (*i.e.* Thomas), who reigned after him. Of this king and his successors nothing whatever is known, and judging by the fact that two different lists of them exist, we can only conclude that there were rival claimants to the throne. The most authoritative King Lists give the following 25 names, presumably of kings of Ethiopia as opposed to kings of Aksūm.

1 Tōmās	9 Warada Nagāsh	17 Ramḥay
2 Zagdūr	10 'Awesyā	18 Ḥandē
3 'Aksūmāy	11 'Ēlālyōs	19 Safēlyā
4 'Awesyō	12 Tōmās Şaḥay	20 'Aglebēl
5 Taḥwāsyā	13 Bāsyō	21 Bawāwel
6 'Abrālyūs	14 'Awṭeṭ	22 Bawarīs
7 Warada Şaḥay	15 Zawārī Nebrat	23 Maḥasē
8 Handadyō	16 Safāy	24 Nālkē
25 Bāzēn, in the 8th year of whose reign Christ was born.		

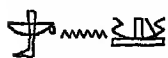
These 25 kings reigned about 950 years, and the 22 kings of Aksūm (for their names see above, p. 205) reigned 188 years.

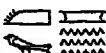
## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

Abyssinian tradition tells us nothing about any of these kings, and how their names came to be preserved is not known. Evidently neither list is complete. At present there is no information to be obtained about the history of Abyssinia from the beginning of the ninth century B.C. to the end of the first century B.C. The Egyptian texts tell us nothing, though it is possible that the Egyptians traded with the Abyssinians during the whole period, both by caravans, which travelled between Egypt and the countries near the Blue Nile, and by ships engaged in the Red Sea trade. Even under the Old Kingdom Egypt had expeditions to Punt for myrrh, gold, incense, ivory, ebony, etc., and the trade in such things between Egypt and the countries near the southern end of the Red Sea must always have been very considerable. But the country to the north of Punt, *i.e.* the southern parts of Abyssinia, must always have produced large quantities of such commodities, and it would seem that in very early times there must have been ports on the western shore of the Red Sea, at which sea-captains could call and load up their ships as they returned from the south. The western coast of the Red Sea belonged to Abyssinia in Pharaonic times, and her people were able to carry down to it from the plateau such products as they wished to export without let or hindrance. When the Ptolemies became masters of Egypt they determined to develop the trade of the country to its fullest extent, and Ptolemy II (B.C. 285-247) was probably the first to realize how great that trade was. The products of Nubia and the Eastern Sūdān came down into Egypt as before, but in ever increasing quantities, for Ptolemy took care that caravans were not pillaged or molested. He opened up the old caravan road from the Nile to the Red Sea via the Wādī Ḥammāmāt, and made it safe for caravans. He paid special attention to the Eastern Delta, where he went in person to consider what could be done to facilitate trade and commerce there generally. In the sixteenth year of his reign he dug a canal, which began at the north of Heliopolis and ended in the Lake of Scorpions , and was used in connection with the Red Sea trade. He founded the town of Ptolema's Epitheras on the western coast of the Red Sea, not far from the modern town of Sawākin, and in the centuries following it became a busy seaport.

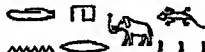
## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

To obtain full information about the markets in the countries at the southern end of the Red Sea he sent a fleet of four large ships



named *haben*, manned by crews of brave, strong men, down the "Great Black Water" , i.e. the Red Sea, and they

sailed southwards as far as the country of the Blacks. From Khemtit (?) and other places they brought back the products of the South to the joy of Ptolemy and his queen. At Ptolemais he settled soldiers, and artisans of all kinds, who built a temple and the houses of the town, and men to till the fields, and over them all he set officials to direct and control their labours. The soldiers went inland and made friends with the natives, who helped them to

catch "many elephants" , and these were brought

down to the coast and shipped to Egypt, whence they were drafted into Ptolemy's army. By such means of peaceful penetration he succeeded in getting authority over the country to the east of the plateau of Abyssinia, and the districts further to the south where the elephant was found. Whether his soldiers came in conflict with the kings of Aksūm or with the kings of other parts of southern Abyssinia is not known, but the general tenor of his inscription on the great stele of Pithom discovered by Naville (for the text see Sethe, *Urkunden*, Leipzig, 1904, II. p. 103, ll. 23-26) suggests that they did not. The merchant classes would rejoice in the impetus given to their trade by the methods of the Greeks, and the people generally. The Egyptian merchants in the Delta quickly saw that new markets on the western coast of the Red Sea were open to them, and that it was easier, quicker and cheaper to send their goods by sea than by the long desert route to the South by way of the Valley of the Nile. The isolation of the Abyssinians was at an end for many centuries.

Ptolemy III, Euergetes I, who reigned from B.C. 247 to 242, continued the good work in connection with the Indian and Red Sea trade which his predecessor had begun, and he himself seems to have sailed down the Red Sea and founded, or refounded the town of Adule, or Adulis, which stood on a bay of the Red Sea called Adulicus Sinus, now known as Annesley Bay. Its modern equivalent is Zulla, or Azule, in north lat. 15° 35', which is nearer

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

the sea than the old town. The earliest inhabitants were Abyssinians, and it is probable that ebony, ivory, gold dust and skins were exported by them from a very early period, but at a later time runaway slaves from Egypt and Arabia made their home there. Ptolemy III seems to have been master of the town, for he says in an inscription that the Adulitian and Ethiopian troops which accompanied him in his great Asiatic campaign came from this neighbourhood. This inscription is written in Greek letters and is commonly known as the "Monumentum Adulitanum," because it was found at Adulis by Cosmas "Indicopleustes" in the first half of the 6th century A.D. Cosmas was originally an Egyptian merchant who was engaged in the Indian trade, and in the prosecution of his business he sailed all over the Mediterranean Sea, the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf, and he travelled in India and Ceylon. After many years spent in trafficking, he became a monk, and devoted the last years of his life to writing down an account of the countries he had seen and a description of the peoples among whom he had travelled, and their history and antiquities. The only work of his extant is his *Χριστιανική Τοπογραφία*, which contains his copy of the inscriptions on the Stele of Adulis. The complete text was first published by Montfaucon in his *Coll. nov. Patrum*, tom. II. p. 141, and scholars recognized its importance immediately. The text was found cut upon the white marble base or pedestal of a throne, at the back of which was a large slab of stone; both the base and the slab were inscribed. When scholars began to examine the text they were greatly puzzled, for the first part of the inscription was in the third person, and the second part in the first person, and some authorities considered it to be a forgery. The difficulty was cleared up by Henry Salt (see his *Voyage*, p. 412), who showed that Cosmas had copied parts of two distinct inscriptions, and run them together as if they were one. The part in the third person was an inscription of Ptolemy III, and that in the first person was an inscription of a native Abyssinian king. Cosmas inadvertently passed from one inscription to the other in his copy, and unfortunately omitted the opening line, or lines, of the second inscription which contained the Abyssinian king's name. Salt believed, as the result of his discovery of an inscription of Aizanes in Greek at Aksūm, that the second inscription on the Stele of Adulis recorded

## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

the conquests of Aizanes, but this is doubted by Littmann, who is probably right.

The inscription of Ptolemy III says that Ptolemy (III), the son of Ptolemy (II) and Arsinoe, the Brother Gods, the offspring of Ptolemy (I) and Berenice, the Saviour Gods, descended through his father from Herakles, the son of Zeus, and through his mother from Dionysos, the son of Zeus, having received from his father the sovereignty of Egypt, Libya, Syria, Phoenicia, Cyprus, Lycia, Caria, and Cyclades, departed on an expedition into Asia. He took with him foot soldiers, and horse soldiers, and a naval contingent, and Troglodyte and Ethiopian elephants, which his father and himself had captured in their [native] countries, and had brought to Egypt and drilled for service in the army. Having conquered all the country about the Euphrates, Cilicia, Pamphylia and Ionia, and the Hellespont and Thrace, and possessing all the armies and elephants in these countries, and having made the kings of all these countries his subjects, he crossed the River Euphrates, and having subdued Mesopotamia and Babylonia and Susiana and Persia and Media and all the rest as far as Bactriana, and having sought out whatever sacred things had been carried off by the Persians from Egypt, and having brought them back with the other treasures from those countries to Egypt, he sent forces through the canals..... The Greek text reads:

Βασιλεὺς μέγας Πτολεμαῖος, υἱὸς βασιλέως Πτολεμαίου καὶ βασιλίσσης Ἀρσινόης θεῶν Ἀδελφῶν, τῶν βασιλέω[ς] Πτολεμαίου καὶ βασιλίσσης Βερενίκης θεῶν Σωτήρων, ἀπόγονος τὰ μὲν ἀπὸ πατρὸς Ἡρακλέους τοῦ Διός, τὰ δὲ ἀπὸ μητρὸς Διονύσου τοῦ Διός, παραλαβὼν παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς τὴν βασιλείαν Αἰγύπτου καὶ Λιβύης καὶ Συρίας καὶ Φοινίκης καὶ Κύπρου καὶ Λυκίας καὶ Καρίας καὶ τῶν Κυκλάδων νήσων, ἐξεστράτευσεν εἰς τὴν Ἀσίαν μετὰ δυνάμειν πεζικῶν καὶ ἵππικῶν καὶ ναυτικοῦ στόλου καὶ ἐλεφάντων Τρωγλοδυτικῶν καὶ Αἰθιοπικῶν, οὓς ὁ τε πατὴρ αὐτοῦ καὶ αὐτὸς πρῶτο(ι) ἐκ τῶν χωρῶν τούτων ἐθήρευσαν καὶ καταγαγόντες εἰς Αἴγυπτον κατεσκεύασαν πρὸς τὴν πολεμικὴν χρεῖαν. κυριεύσας δὲ τῆς τε ἐντὸς Εὐφράτου χώρας πάσης καὶ Κιλικίας καὶ Παμφυλίας καὶ Ἰωνίας καὶ τοῦ Ἑλλησπόντου καὶ Θράκης καὶ τῶν δυνάμειν τῶν ἐν ταῖς χώραις ταύταις πασῶν καὶ ἐλεφάντων Ἰνδικῶν, καὶ τοὺς μονάρχους τοὺς ἐν ταῖς τόποις πάντας ὑπηκόους καταστήσας διέβη τὸν Εὐφρά-

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

την ποταμὸν καὶ τὴν Μεσοποταμίαν καὶ Βαβυλωνίαν καὶ Σουσιανὴν καὶ Περσίδα καὶ Μηδίαν καὶ τὴν λοιπὴν πᾶσαν ἕως Βακτριανῆς ὑφ' ἑαυτῷ ποιησάμενος καὶ ἀναζητήσας ὅσα ὑπὸ τῶν Περσῶν ἱερὰ ἐξ Αἰγύπτου ἐξήχθη καὶ ἀνακομίσας μετὰ τῆς ἄλλης γάζης τῆς ἀπὸ τῶν τόπων εἰς Αἴγυπτον δυνάμεις ἀπέστειλεν διὰ τῶν ὀρυχθέντων ποταμῶν.....See Dittenberger, *Inscriptiones Selectae*, vol. I. p. 84, No. 54.

St Jerome, in his Commentary on Daniel xi. *vv.* 7 and 8, says that Ptolemy took from the kingdom of Seleucus 40,000 talents of silver, and 2500 cups and images of the gods, among which were those which Cambyses carried off from Egypt to Persia. And he adds that the Egyptians, an idolatrous race, called him "Euergetes," because he had brought back their gods after many years. The bringing back of the Egyptian gods from Persia to Egypt is also mentioned in the Stele of Canopus (ll. 10 and 11).

The inscription of Ptolemy III at Adulis proves beyond all doubt that he and his father possessed great power in Eastern Abyssinia, a fact which suggests either that the kings of Aksūm were powerless to stop the invasion of the Greeks into Abyssinia, or that they had become tributaries of the Ptolemics. Ptolemy IV followed the policy of his predecessors in collecting elephants in Abyssinia for military purposes, and this fact is proved by a votive inscription in the British Museum (No. 1207). The text is in Greek and is a dedication to the god Ares by Alexandros, the general of the elephant hunt in the Sūdān, and his officers Charimortos and Lichas. It was first published by Hall (*Classical Rev.* vol. XII. 1898, p. 274).

### THE KINGS FROM BĀZĒN TO 'ABREHĀ AND 'AṢBĒHĀ

A.D. 3 TO A.D. 333

The synchronism of the Chronicles for this period of Abyssinian history is absolutely false. The more authoritative Chronicles state that Christ was born in the 8th year of the reign of Bāzēn, and that Christianity was introduced into Abyssinia in the year 333. (Basset, *Études*, p. 97; Dillmann, *Geschichte des abyssinischen Reiches*, p. 343 f.) Bāzēn reigned 17 years, and during the period A.D. 12–333, according to the Chronicles followed in this book, the following kings reigned:

## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

- |                    |                             |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 Şenfa 'Ar'ad (I) | 6 Sab'a 'Asgad              |
| 2 Bāḥr Sagad       | 7 Şeyōn Gezā                |
| 3 Germā 'Asfarē    | 8 'Agdūr                    |
| 4 Sharguāy         | 9 Şenfa 'Ar'ad (II)         |
| 5 Zar'ay           | 10, 11 'Abrehā and 'Aṣḃehā. |

And the chroniclers add, "During the period of their rule, and whilst they were at Aksūm, Christianity appeared. At that time there were no Turks. The father of Salāmā (*i.e.* Frumentius) was the merchant (*i.e.* Meropius) with whom came Abbā Salāmā." The statements are quite clear and definite. But the other King Lists say that 30 kings reigned during the period between Bāzēn and 'Abrehā and 'Aṣḃehā, and the two classes of Lists are irreconcilable.

If we judged by the silence of the Abyssinian Chronicles, we might think that nothing of historical importance happened in Abyssinia during the first 330 years of the Christian Era, but the Greek inscriptions on the marble throne at Adulis, and the Greek inscription found by Salt at Aksūm, and the monuments inscribed in Sabaeen and Ethiopic discovered by the German Expedition to Aksūm tell a very different story. After the elephant hunters of the Ptolemies had opened up the country, merchants of many nationalities, Greek, Roman, Jew and Arab, took their wares to the new seaports on the western coast of the Red Sea, and some of them settled down there, and began to send their caravans into the interior. Adulis became the chief northern port and the seat of the large slave market which provided caravans and independent merchants proceeding inland with carriers. Thither came from the south and west ivory and tusks of the rhinoceros, hippopotamus and rhinoceros hides, tortoise-shell brought from the great lakes of Central Africa, apes and baboons, gold dust, gum, spices, slaves, etc. One of the first towns in Abyssinia to profit by the great development in trade and commerce which began soon after the establishment of the Greeks as kings in Egypt, was Aksūm. The town must have been from a very early period a halting-place for caravans, and a market-place of considerable local importance, though no writer mentions it until about the middle of the first century A.D., when it had become a great and wealthy town with a large population, among which were so many Greeks that Greek was the language commonly used. Its seaport at that time was

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

Adulis, 120 miles distant, in much the same way as Alexandretta is, or was, the seaport of Aleppo. The Abyssinian writers tell us that Aksūm was founded by the immediate descendants of Kūsh and refounded by the Queen of Sheba, but they were, and are, mistaken: their geographical, and we may add chronological knowledge was very faulty.

We know now that the great city of Aksūm known to the Greek and Roman historians was not founded until the beginning of the 1st century A.D., and that the Axūmite kingdom did not reach the zenith of its power till the middle of the 4th century. The rise of the Axūmite kingdom synchronizes with the downfall of the kingdom of Napata through the defeat of Queen Candace by Petronius, the Roman Prefect of Egypt, about B.C. 23, and the conquest of the Sabaeans by the Himyarites about the same time. The name of the founder of the Axūmite kingdom is unknown, but he may well have been the king whose fragmentary inscription in Greek is published by Littmann (*Aksūm*, IV. No. 2). This inscription appears to have been written in the 1st century A.D., and commemorates the building, or rebuilding of a shrine in honour of Ares, the Sabaeans Mahram, as a thank-offering for the victory which he gained over the Sabaeans, who lived on the eastern side of the Red Sea.

One of the near successors of this unknown founder of Aksūm was probably the king whose exploits are described by himself in the Greek inscription which follows that of Ptolemy III on the Stele of Adulis. Cosmas, who copied it into his notebook, unfortunately omitted the first line and a part of the second, and therefore the king's name is unknown. It is clear from the inscription itself that the king was not the founder of the Axūmite kingdom, but it is probable that he lived in the second half of the 1st century A.D. Some authorities have identified him with the Ζωσκαλης who is mentioned in the *Periplus maris Erythraei* (ed. Müller, *Geographi Graeci Minores*, tom. I. Cap. 5, p. 261). Dillmann thought (*Abhandlungen der königl. Akad. d. Wissen.* 1877, p. 195 f.) that Zoscales was an immediate successor of the founder, and was not to be identified with the king of the Adulis inscription. The question has been fully discussed by Dittenberger (*Inscriptiones Selectae*, Bd. I. pp. 285, 286), Glaser (*Skizze*, Bd. II. pp. 471-564), D. H. Müller



## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

(*Denkschriften*, Bd. XLIII. 1893, No. III. p. 3 ff.), and others. The inscription describes four series of raids, or campaigns.

In his first campaign (ll. 1-10) he conquered the Gě'ez people, whose original home was Southern Arabia, 'Agāmē, Sogaet, Adua ('Adawā, Adowa), Zingabēne (*Ζιγγαβηνέ*), 'Angabō, Tiamo, Gambela, 'Atāgau, Kalaa (site unknown), Semēn (or Semīen), and the region of the Takaze (Nile). All these places are situated to the north and east of Aksūm.

In his second campaign (ll. 10-15) the king went to Lasiné, Zaá, and Gabala, where there were hot springs, *i.e.* to the region now called Mansa' and Ḥabāb, and he vanquished the people of Atalmō, the Bega tribes, later called Blemmyes, and the Tangatōor, all of whom dwelt in the deserts between Upper Egypt and Nubia and Abyssinia and the Red Sea.

In his third campaign (ll. 16-25) the king attacked the peoples who lived to the east and south of the plateau of Abyssinia. The countries called 'Αγνινέ and Μετινέ are to the east of the steep side of the plateau, and bore the same names in the time of Cosmas (6th century). Seséa, Littmann thinks, were the dwellers in the Saho or Shoho of to-day, where stands the inaccessible mountain of Kohaito. The old caravan road ran not over Kohaito, but through Koloē at its foot. The peoples of the 'Ραύσων and Σωλατὲ were dwellers in the incense-bearing countries near and in Somaliland.

The king's last great warlike effort was to dispatch an army across the Red Sea to punish the 'Αρραβίτας or Himyarites, and the Κιναιδοκολπίτας, or dwellers in Arabia as far to the south as Aden (ll. 26-29). The latter had been in the habit of plundering merchants by sea, and were in fact pirates, and the former pillaged caravans marching from Hadramaut northwards. Λευκὴ κόμη was probably a port near the southern end of the land of the Nabateans, and is thought to be the modern Al-Haurā (Littmann, *Aksūm*, Bd. I. p. 44). In ll. 26-29 the king says that he has conquered all the countries on his borders as far as the land of Σάσου. This country lay to the extreme south-west of Abyssinia, and beyond that lay the great World Ocean; it is said to have been rich in gold, which was called τάνχαρος. Conti Rossini has found this word in the Beja and Nuba languages under the form "dungāra" (see his *Florilegium*, p. 148). In the last lines of

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

his inscription the king says that he has dedicated the throne on which it is cut to Zeus, the god of heaven, and to Poseidon, the god of the sea, and to his tribal god Maḥram, here called Ares; curiously enough he has omitted Baḥēr, or Medr, the Earth-god. The king was a pagan, and worshipped the gods of the Sky, the Earth and the Sea, and his statement is a sufficient answer to the tradition that Christianity was introduced into Abyssinia about the year 70 by the eunuch who was baptized by Philip. The Abyssinians say that the eunuch was the chief steward of Candace, and that he was stationed in Gāzā to administer the properties there which had been given to the Queen of Sheba by Solomon. But Candace (see above, p. 62) was a title of the queens of Meroé, not Abyssinia. In the first line of his inscription, which is wanting, the king probably stated of what town or country of Abyssinia he was a native; as the rest of the inscription supplies no information on this point it may be assumed that he was purely African, and perhaps of the same stock as the later Nubian kings who founded the Merottic kingdom. The methods of warfare of the Abyssinian and Nubian kings about this time were the same, and their Annals are couched in much the same phraseology. The object of the kings of Aksūm and the kings of Meroé was to kill the peoples they attacked, to lay waste their land, and to carry off as many cattle and slaves as possible. The Annals of the Nubian kings Ḥersatef and Nastasen make this clear.

The following rendering of the Aksūmite king's inscription at Adulis will give a general idea of its contents, and a transcript of Dittenberger's text (*Inscriptiones Selectae*, I. No. 199) is added.

.....and having commanded the peoples who lived near to me to keep the peace, I waged war fiercely and overthrew the following peoples. I fought the Γάζη people, then the Ἀγάμε and the Σιγύην, and when I had vanquished them I set apart the one half of their possessions and of their inhabitants as my share. Having crossed the Nile I overthrew Αὐὰ and the Ζιγγαβηνέ, and Ἀγγαβέ, and Τιαμὰ, and the Ἀθαγαοὺς, and the Καλαὰ, and the Σεμῆνε, a people who live on the other side of the Nile, among inhospitable mountains that are covered deeply in snow, having frozen snowdrifts everywhere, and deep snow in which men sink up to their knees.

## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

Then I overthrew the *Λασινὲ*, and the *Ζαὰ*, and the *Γαβαλά*, who live in a range of mountains, from the sides of which springs of hot water gush forth and pour down the sides of the mountains. Then I overthrew *Ἀταλμῶ*, and the *Βεγὰ*, and all the people who camp round about them. And having overthrown the *Ταγγαῖτῶν*, who occupy the country as far as the frontier of Egypt, I turned away from my own territories and marched to Egypt. Then I fought with the *Ἀννιὲ* and the *Μετινὲ*, who live on precipitous mountains, and the people of *Σεσεὰ*, who had fled to a very high and impassable mountain. I camped round about them and made them prisoners, and I took what I wished for of their young men and young women, and their youths and maidens, and all their possessions. I overthrew the peoples of *Ῥαύσων*, who live in districts in the interior with the Barbarians who traffick in incense on vast waterless plains, and the people of *Σωλατὲ*, and I commanded them keep guard over the sea-beaches. When I had fought and overthrown in battles, wherein I myself took part, all these peoples who were protected by mighty mountains, I permitted them all to keep their lands as tributaries. Now the greater number of these people submitted to me voluntarily and paid tribute. I sent a naval force and soldiers against the *Ἀρραβίτας* and the *Κιναιδοκολπίτας*, who live on the other side of the Red Sea, and when I had overthrown all their kings, I commanded them to pay tribute for their country, and to go about their business by sea and land in peace. I made war from *Δευκὴ κόμῃ* to the land of the Sabaeans. All these peoples have been conquered by me, the first and only one of the kings who were before me, through the grace which [I have found] before my august god Ares, who has also begotten me, and who has made subject to my sovereignty all the peoples who adjoin my land in the East as far as the Land of Incense, and in the West as far as the lands of Ethiopia and the *Σάσου*, some against whom I myself marched and fought, and some against whom I sent [troops]. And having established peace in all the world which has been conquered by me I have come to Adulis to offer up sacrifices to Zeus and Ares, and to Poseidon on behalf of the sea-faring folk. And having collected and gathered together my troops, I establish this throne on this spot and offer it to Ares as a pledge in the twenty-seventh year of my sovereignty.

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPAINS

- 2 .....μεθ' ἃ ἀνδρείως (ας) τὰ μὲν ἔγγιστα τοῦ βασιλείου μου  
 3 ἔθνη εἰρη|νεύεσθαι κελεύσας ἐπολέμησα καὶ ὑπέταξα μάχαις τὰ  
 4 ὑπογε|γραμμένα ἔθνη· Γάζη ἔθνος ἐπολέμησα, ἔπειτα Ἄγάμε  
 καὶ  
 5 Σιγύην, καὶ | νικήσας τὴν ἡμίσειαν πάντων τῶν παρ' αὐτοῖς  
 καὶ  
 6 αὐτῶν ἐμερισάμην. Ἀὐὰ | καὶ Ζιγγαβηνὲ καὶ Ἀγγαβὲ καὶ Τιαμὰ  
 7 καὶ Ἄθαγαοὺς καὶ Καλαὰ | καὶ Σεμήνη ἔθνος πέραν τοῦ Νείλου  
 8 ἐν δυσβάτοις καὶ χιονώδε|σιν ὄρεσιν οἰκοῦντας, ἐν οἷς διὰ παντὸς  
 9 νιφετοὶ καὶ κρῦη | καὶ χιόνες βαθεῖαι ὡς μέχρι γονάτων κατα-  
 δύνειν  
 10 ἄνδρα | τὸν ποταμὸν διαβὰς ὑπέταξα. ἔπειτα Λασινὲ καὶ Ζαὰ  
 καὶ  
 11 |Γαβαλά, οἰκοῦντας παρ' ὄρε[σ]ι θερμῶν ὑδάτων βλύνουσι  
 12 καὶ | καταρρύτφ, Ἄταλμῶ καὶ Βογὰ καὶ τὰ σὺν αὐτοῖς ἔθνη  
 πάντα  
 13 |Ταγγαιτῶν τοὺς μέχρι τῶν τῆς Αἰγύπτου ὀρίων οἰκοῦντας  
 ὑποτάξας  
 14 |πεξεύεσθαι ἐποίησα τὴν ὄδον ἀπὸ τῶν τῆς ἐμῆς βασιλείας  
 τόπων  
 15 |μέχρι Αἰγύπτου ἔπειτα Ἄννινὲ καὶ Μετινέ, ἐν ἀποκρήμυοις  
 16 οἰκοῦν|τας ὄρεσιν, Σεσεὰ ἔθνος ἐπολέμησα, οὗς καὶ μέγιστον καὶ  
 17 δυσβατώτατον ὄρος ἀνελθόντας περιφρουρήσας κατήγαγον καὶ  
 ἀπελ-  
 18 εξάμην | ἐμαντῶ τοὺς τε νέους αὐτῶν καὶ γυναῖκας καὶ παῖδας  
 19 καὶ παρθένους καὶ πάσαν τὴν ὑπάρχουσαν αὐτοῖς κτήσιν.  
 Ῥαύσων  
 20 ἔθνη|μεσόγεια λιβανωτοφόρων βαρβάρων, οἰκοῦντα ἐντὸς πεδίων  
 21 μεγάλων | ἀνύδρων, καὶ Σωλατὲ ἔθνος ὑπέταξα, οἷς καὶ τοὺς  
 22 αἰγιαλοὺς τῆς θα|λάσσης φυλάσσειν ἐκέλευσα. ταῦτα δὲ πάντα  
 23 τὰ ἔθνη ὄρεσιν ἰσχυροῖς πεφρουρημένα αὐτὸς ἐγὼ ἐν ταῖς μάχαις  
 24 παρὼν νικήσας καὶ | ὑποτάξας ἐχαρισάμην αὐτοῖς πάσας τὰς  
 25 χώρας ἐπὶ φόροις. ἄλλα δὲ|πλείστα ἔθνη ἐκόντα ὑπετάγη μοι  
 ἐπὶ φόροις.  
 26 καὶ πέραν δὲ τῆς Ἐρυθρᾶς | θαλάσσης οἰκοῦντας Ἄρραβίτας  
 καὶ  
 27 Κιναϊδοκολπίτας στρατεύμα ναυτι|κὸν καὶ πεζικὸν διαπεμφά-  
 μενος

## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

- 28 καὶ ὑποτάξας αὐτῶν τοὺς βασιλέας φόβους τῆς γῆς τελεῦ  
ἐκέλευσα
- 29 καὶ ὀδεύεσθαι μετ' εἰρήνης καὶ πλέεσθαι, | ἀπὸ τε Λευκῆς  
κώμης ἕως
- 30 τῶν Σαβαίων χώρας ἐπολέμησα. πάντα δὲ ταῦτα τὰ ἔθνη πρῶ-  
τος καὶ
- 31 μόνος βασιλέων τῶν πρὸ ἐμοῦ ὑπέταξα δι' ἣν ἔχω | πρὸς τὸν  
μέγιστον
- 32 θεόν μου Ἄρην εὐχαριστῶν, ὅς με καὶ ἐγέννησεν, δι' | οὐ πάντα
- 33 τὰ ἔθνη τὰ ὁμορουντα τῇ ἐμῇ γῇ ἀπὸ μὲν ἀνατολῆς μέχρι | τῆς  
Λιβανωτοφόρου, ἀπὸ δὲ δύσεως μέχρι τῶν τῆς Αἰθιοπίας καὶ
- 34 Σάσου | τόπων, ὑπ' ἐμαντὸν ἐποίησα, ἃ μὲν αὐτὸς ἐγὼ ἔλθων
- 35 καὶ νικῆσας, ἃ δὲ | διαπεμπόμενος, καὶ ἐν εἰρήνῃ καταστήσας
- 36 πάντα τὸν ὑπ' ἐμοῖ κόσμον | κατήλθον εἰς τὴν Ἄδουλι τῷ Διὶ
- 37 καὶ τῷ Ἄρει καὶ τῷ Ποσειδῶνι θησιάζασαι ὑπὲρ τῶν πλοιζομένων.
- 38 ἀθροίσας δέ μου τὰ στρατεύματα καὶ | ὑψ' ἐν ποιήσας, ἐπὶ  
τούτῃ τῷ
- 39 τόπῳ καθίσας τόνδε τὸν δίφρον παραθήκην τῷ Ἄρει ἐποίησα  
ἕτει τῆς ἐμῆς βασιλείας εἰκοστῷ ἑβδόμῳ.

Very little is known of the history of Aksūm in the 2nd and 3rd centuries, and though the names of a few of her kings are found on coins and in inscriptions, it is impossible to put together any connected statement about the period. A fragment of Greek inscription found at Daqqī Maḥarī says that Sebruthes, CEBPOYΘHC, or Sembruthes, CEMBPOYΘHC, "king of the kings of Aksūm," came there and set up that inscription in the 24th year of his reign, but when that was cannot be said. It is uncertain whether he is to be identified with the Ella-Shamara of the King Lists, who only reigned three years (see Dillmann in *Zeit. Deut. Morg. Gesellschaft*, Bd. VII. p. 344, No. 23). The inscriptions of 'Ēzānā give us the name of another king, viz. 'Ella 'Amīdā **ἑλλησμιδ**, but as he was the father of 'Ēzānā, who reigned during the first half of the 4th century A.D., his date can be fixed approximately. From coins we obtain the names of the kings Aphilas, Endybis, 'Ēzānā and Alalmiryis **ΑΛΑΜΙΡΥΙΣ** = **ΑΛΑΜΙΔΙΣ** or 'Ella 'Amīdā (?). All these kings were pagans, and their coins have on them signs for the solar disk and the crescent moon ☽. On all pagan, and on some Christian coins a king's head wearing a crown appears on the

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

obverse, and a king's head bound with a fillet or bandlet appears on the reverse. Various theories have been formed about the significance of the second head, and they are summarized by Littmann in *Aksūm*, Bd. I. p. 46.

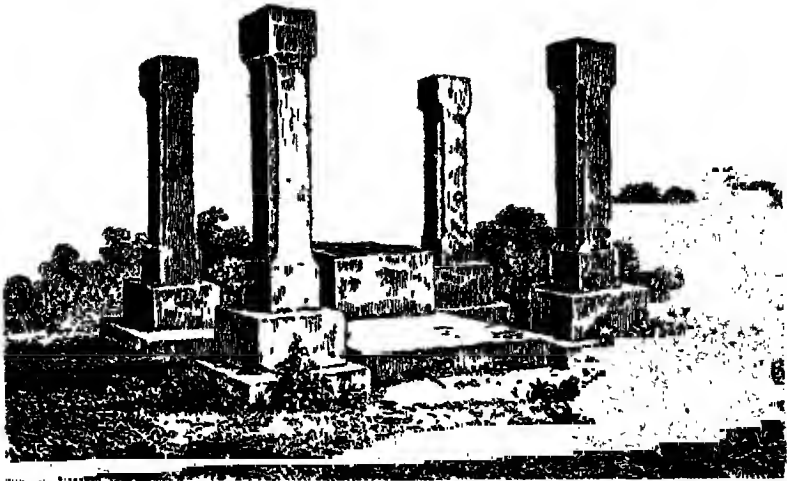
We have seen from the Adulis inscription that the dominions of the king who set up his throne at Adulis in the 1st century A.D. extended from Aksūm in the north to Somaliland in the south, and from the Nubian frontier on the east bank of the Nile to Himyār on the east coast of the Red Sea. It is doubtful to what extent the rule of the kings of Aksūm was effective during the 2nd and 3rd centuries, but their hold on the countries round about the Takaze was so weak that the Negro peoples on the south seized many provinces of the Meroitic kingdom, and eventually destroyed the power of the Candace Queens and threatened the security of Abyssinia. Such was the state of affairs when 'Ella 'Amīdā, of whose acts we know nothing, came to the throne, and when his son 'Ēzānā succeeded him, he realized that the chief work of his life would be the re-conquest of all the countries which, in the time of his predecessor who set up his throne at Adulis, had been included in the kingdom of Abyssinia.

### 'ĒZĀNĀ ጊዛኛ OF ḤALĒN ሐሌን, EARLY FOURTH CENTURY

The date of the birth, and the date of his death, and the number of the years of the reign of 'Ēzānā are not known. He was the greatest of all the kings who reigned over Aksūm, and under his rule the kingdom of Abyssinia attained its greatest extent, and the people reached a height of prosperity hitherto unknown. Aksūm became the chief centre of trade and commerce in north-east Africa, and merchants of many nationalities thronged its streets. Aksūm was to Abyssinia at that time what Alexandria was to Egypt. Every inscription of any importance found in Aksūm was set up by 'Ēzānā, and his Annals are written in Greek, Abyssinian and Sabaeen, or Himyaritic; like Darius the Great he intended men to read his exploits each in his own language, when they visited his capital. Judging by the number of his campaigns, and the great distances which he marched with his army, his reign must have been long, and it was certainly glorious. He was not



A SERVICE HELD OUTSIDE A CHURCH IN MASSINA ON A DAY OF FESTIVAL



THE FOUR PILLARS OF THE THRONE CANOPY OF A KING (IZĀNĪ) AT AKSUM  
FOR KRENCKER'S HOUSED ECCLESIASTION. SEE HELMANN AND VON LUKE 'DEUTSCH AKSUM  
EXPLORATION, BAND II, I. 6.





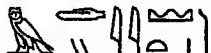




## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

only a great soldier, but a careful tactician, as his Annals show, and that he was clear-headed and long-sighted politically is proved by the fact that he adopted Christianity as the official religion of his country. The King Lists tell us that Christianity came into Abyssinia during the joint reigns of 'Abrehā and 'Aṣḃehā, but of these kings they tell us nothing. They were considered by the authors of the Lists members of the so-called "Solomonic" line of kings, but they certainly were not *de facto* kings of Abyssinia for, as said above, it was 'Ēzānā who proclaimed Christianity the religion of Abyssinia. And he himself became a Christian, and abandoned the worship of the old Sabaeen gods, which were adored by the greater number of his people. This is made quite certain by his inscriptions, some of which were written when he was a pagan, and some after he had adopted Christianity; and on the coins struck during the later years of his reign the cross ☩ is substituted for the solar disk and lunar crescent (see above, p. 146). The Emperor Constantius addressed a letter to Αιζανα and Σαιζανας in the year 356, and these brothers are undoubtedly the 'Ēzānā Ⲭⲏⲛⲁ and She'āzānā Ⲭⲏⲛⲁ of the Greek, Sabaeen and Ethiopic inscriptions published by Dillmann, D. H. Muller and Littmann. Who then were 'Abrehā and 'Aṣḃehā? It has been thought that their names are either corruptions of the names 'Ēzānā and She'āzānā, or secondary names of the king and his brother, but neither view seems probable or possible. None of the chroniclers mention 'Ēzānā and his brother She'āzānā, and it seems as if they wilfully ignored them, and claimed the conversion of their country for two members of the so-called Solomonic line of kings.

All the inscriptions of 'Ēzānā begin with the statement that he was King of Aksūm, Ḥimyār, Raydān, Saba', Salhēn, Ṣiyāmō, Begā, and Kāsū, and he claims as his heavenly father the invincible god Maḥram. His method of dealing with the various peoples of his country at the beginning of his reign is described succinctly in an early inscription (Müller, *Epig. Denk.*, pp. 29-35; Littmann, *Aksūm*, No. 8) thus: "He who said, I will obey, was safe; he who refused was killed." As he passed through the country on his first campaign king after king came out to meet him, and brought him gifts, and did homage to him, and after he had given them a set of commands, he allowed them each to return to his own country.

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

He opened up roads in some places, and made existing caravan tracks safe, not only for the passage of men but of women also. He took great care of his soldiers, and whenever they came to a town he made the enemy prepare an abundant supply of food for them. After a fight with the enemy he held a sort of roll-call, and enlisted recruits to make good his loss of men. When he came to the land of Matata (?)  he did battle with the people thereof, and made them cease from their bloody raids; and they swore oaths of fealty to him, and their king brought him gifts. It may be noted that the Nubian King Ḥersatef made war on the king of Mṭt,  (l. 78), and another Nubian king, Nastasen, mentions a country called Mṭit,  (l. 61). By a judicious mixture of conciliation and fighting 'Ēzānā brought order among the lawless peoples of his kingdom.

The Begā tribes who lived in the deserts to the north of Abyssinia, and who were during the reign of 'Ēzānā receiving a subsidy from the Romans, gave him a great deal of trouble. Wild and lawless by nature, and lovers of fighting, they pillaged caravans with impunity, for the Meroitic kingdom had fallen, and near them there was no power strong enough to restrain and punish them. 'Ēzānā sent his brothers She'āzānā and Ḥadēfā  against them, and having subdued them, deported six of their kings, together with all their camp and sheep and cattle, and 4400 men, and settled them in a district called in Greek, Matlia, and in Ethiopic, Dawala-Byrn  (vowels uncertain). The transport of this host to Aksūm occupied four months, and 'Ēzānā supplied them with meat, bread, beer, wine and water during the journey. Having provided the six kings with apparel and food he sent them and their tribes to their new home, and gave them 25,140 cattle to stock their farms. 'Ēzānā was so grateful to Ares for his success in this matter that he dedicated five statues to him, one in gold, one in silver and three in copper (bronze?). The inscription recording these facts is extant in three versions, Greek, Ethiopic and Sabaeen. The Greek version was discovered by Salt and published and translated by him in his *Voyage*, London, 1814, pp. 410, 411; and in Valentia's *Travels*, London, 1805, vol. III. p. 174 ff.; see also Müller, *Epig. Denk.*, 1894, p. 16; Dittenberger

## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

*Inscriptiones Selectae*, Bd. I. p. 298 ff.; and Littmann, *Aksūm*, Bd. IV. p. 4. The Sabaeen version was discovered by J. T. Bent (*Sacred City*, London, 1896, p. 214 ff.), and the Ethiopic by Littmann, who has published and translated all three (*Aksūm*, Bd. IV. Nos. 4, 6, 7). Dittenberger's Greek text reads:

1 Ἀειζανᾶς βασιλεὺς Ἀξωμιτῶν κα[ι] 2 Ὀμηριτῶν καὶ τοῦ Ῥαιδᾶν καὶ Αἰθ-3-ιόπων καὶ Σαβαιεῶν καὶ τοῦ Σιλεῆ 4 καὶ τοῦ Τιαμῶ καὶ Βουγαειτῶν κ[αὶ] το[ῦ] 5 Κάσου, βασιλεὺς βασιλέων, υἱὸς θεοῦ 6 ἀνικῆτου Ἄρεως, ἀτακτησάντων 7 κατὰ καιρὸν τοῦ ἔθνους τῶν Βουγαει-8-τῶν ἀπεστ[ε]ίλαμεν τοὺς ἡμετέροισι 9 ἀδελφοῦσι Σαῖαζανᾶ καὶ τὸν Ἀδηφᾶ[ν] 10 τούτους πολεμήσαι καὶ παραδεδο- 11-κότων αὐτῶν ὑποτάξαντες αὐτοὺς 12 ἤγαγον πρὸς ἡμᾶς μετὰ καὶ τῶν θρεμ-13-μάτων αὐτῶν βοῶν τε ἕΡΙΒ καὶ προ-14-βάτων βῶΚΔ καὶ κτηνῶν νωτοφόρω[ν] 15 θρέψαντες αὐτοὺς βόεσιν τε καὶ ἐπισιτι[σ]- 16-μῶ ἀνών[ης], ποτίζοντες αὐτοὺς ζύτω τε 17 καὶ οἴνω καὶ ὑδρεύ- 18-μασι πάντα [ε]ἰς χορ-18-τάσιαν οἵτινες ἦσαν τὸν ἀριθμὸν βασιλ[ι]- 19-σκοὶ ἕξ σὺν τῷ ὄχλῳ αὐτῶν τὸν ἀριθμὸν ΔΥΚ 20 ἀννωνεόμενοι καθ' ἑκάστην ἡμέραν ἄρ-21-τους σιτίνοισι ΛΛϞ Ϟ[αὶ] οἶνον ἐπὶ μῆνας . . 22 . . ἄχρ[ε]ις οὐκ ἀγάγουσιν αὐτοὺς πρὸς ἡμᾶς. το[ῦ]-23- 24-τους οὖν, δωρησάμενοι αὐτοῖς πάντα τὰ ἐπι-24-τήδ[ε]ια κ[αὶ] ἀμφιάσαντες αὐτοῖς, μετοικήσαντες[ες] 25 κατεστήσαμεν [ε]ἰς τινα τόπον τῆς ἡμετέρας χ[ώ]-26-ρας καλούμενον Μάτλια, κ[αὶ] ἐκελεύ- 27-σαμεν αὐ-27-τοὺς πάλιν ἀννωνεῦσθαι, παρασχόμενοι 28 τοῖς ἕξασιν βασιλείσκοις βόας μΒΘΡμ ὑπὲρ δὲ εὐ-29-χαριστίας τοῦ μ[ε] γεννή- 30-σαντος ἀνικῆτου Ἄρεως 30 ἀνέθηκα αὐτῷ ἀνδριάντα χρυσοῦν [ε]ν[α] κ[αὶ] ἀργύ-31-ρον ἓνα κ[αὶ] χαλκοῦς γ' ἐπ' ἀγαθῶι.

### 'ĒZĀNĀ DEPORTS SIX REBEL BEGĀ KINGS TO MATLIA. TRANSLATION

1 'Ēzānā, King of Aksūm and 2 of Ḥimyār, and of Raidān, and of 3 Ethiopia, and of Saba', and of Salhēn, 4 and of Ṣiyāniō, and of Begā, and of 5 Kāsū, the King of Kings, the son of the 6 invincible god Ares. As the 7 peoples of the Begā had rebelled, 8 we sent our 9 brothers Shai'azānā and Ḥadēfān 10 to make war on them. And having 11 laid down their arms, [our brothers] subdued them and 12 brought them to us with their camp-followers, 13 [and] 3112 cattle, 14 and 6224 (?) sheep and pack animals, 15 giving

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

them cattle and 16 grain to eat, and beer and 17 wine and water to drink to the 18 full according to their number, 19 [that is to say] six tributary kings with their people, in number 4400. 20 They received each day 21 22,000 wheaten cakes and wine for 22 [four] months whilst they were bringing them to us. These 23 we allowed, having provided them with all kinds of food 24 and given them apparel, to depart, 25 and they settled in a district belonging to our 26 dominion, which is called Matlia. And we commanded 27 again that food should be given to them, and we 28 granted to the six kings 25,140 cattle. To 29 obtain the favour of my begetter, the invincible Ares, 30 I have set up to him one statue in gold, and 31 one in silver, and three in copper, for good (or benefit).

In the Sabaeen and Ethiopic versions of this inscription the last paragraph, dealing with the dedication of the statues, is longer, and it is stated that they were dedicated to the gods 'Astar **ዐስተር** and Beḥēr **ቡሔር**, or Madara **መደረ**, and to Maḥram **መሕርም**, *i.e.* Ares. Then comes another paragraph containing a curse on the man who shall destroy, injure or overthrow what the king has set up there: he shall die and his offspring and posterity shall be rooted up out of the land. On the other hand the man who shall pay them honour shall be blessed. And the king prays that men shall tell the story of what he has done, and recount the glory of his city [Aksūm] for ever. He concludes by saying that he has brought to Maḥram (*i.e.* endowed him with) a large piece of ground and an estate(?), **ጸወነ፣ ወበደሐ**.

Another important campaign of 'Ēzānā is made known to us by an inscription discovered by Littmann (No. 9). The king marched into districts to the east and south-east of Aksūm, and soon after he set up 'Aba'alke'ō **አበአልክዮ** the king of the 'Aguēzāt **አጊዛት** and his men came to meet him and brought him gifts. Marching on into 'Atāgau **አታገው**, he collected camels and beasts of burden and men and women and food for a march of 20 days. On the third day 'Ēzānā discovered treachery in 'Aba'alke'ō, and he stripped him naked **በከ** and had him bound in fetters with those who carried his throne. 'Ēzānā went to several places, or sent his troops to them, and imposed his will on the peoples everywhere. The end of the inscription is mutilated, but it seems that the king was satisfied with his campaign.

## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

The next campaign of 'Ēzānā was undertaken for punitive purposes. It seems that the Ṣaranē, a wild, lawless and disaffected people, whose kingdom was 'Afān, among their other hostile acts had attacked a merchant caravan and killed all the people in it. Where 'Afān was situated is not known, but it lay probably far to the south, so far from Aksūm that its people were not afraid to carry on their lawless practices. 'Ēzānā sent three of his armies against them, and he himself followed and joined them in 'Ālāhā, and the usual slaughter took place. He then went on to attack four allied tribes of the Ṣaranē, and captured the ringleader, 'Alīta, and his two sons. A fierce fight took place, and hundreds of men and women were killed, and about two hundred men, women and children were taken prisoners. 'Ēzānā carried off as spoil nearly thirty-two thousand cattle and about eight hundred beasts of burden. The campaign was very successful, and the king was so well satisfied that he set up a throne in Shādo, and thanked his gods 'Astar and Beḥēr and Meder for his victory, and gave to Maḥrem one hundred cattle and fifty prisoners. The style of the narrative resembles that of the inscriptions of Ḥersatef and Nastasen, and it is probable that 'Ēzānā treated the peoples of 'Afān in precisely the same way, and for the same reasons, as these Nubian kings had done a few hundreds of years earlier. The inscription is typical, and a transcript is given with an English translation.

### INSCRIPTION OF 'ĒZĀNĀ (AIZANES) WHEN A PAGAN (Littmann, No. 10)

- 1 [ጌ]ዛና | ወልደ | አሌ (*sic*) | ዐሚዳ | ብእስዩ |
- 2 [ሐ]ሌን | ንጉሠ | አክሱም | ወዘ | ሕሚር |
- 3 [ወ]ዘ | ረደዳን | ወዘ | ሰበእ | ወዘ | ሰል
- 4 ሐን | ወዘ | ጽዮም | ወዘ | ብጋ | ወዘ | ካሱ |
- 5 [ወ]ልደ | መሕርም | ዘአይትመዋእ | ለ
- 6 [ፀ]ር | ፀብኡ | ጸረኔ | መንግሥቶሙ | አ
- 7 [ፋ]ን | ሰቤ | ገፋዐን (*sic*) | ወቀተል (*sic*) | ነጋዲ
- 8 [ተ] | ወእምዝ | ፀበእናሁ | ወእምቀዳ[ሚ] [ | ]
- 9 ፈነውነ | ሰራዊተ | ሰርጭ | መሐዛ | ወ
- 10 ሰርጭ | ዳኳን | ወሰርጭ | ሐራ | ወለሊ

ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

11 ነ | ተለውነ | ወጎደርነ | ምግባእ | መ  
 12 ራድ | ግላሃ | ወአውፈርነ | ሰራዊተ  
 13 ነ | ወቀተልዎ | ወዴወውዎ | ወመሀር  
 14 ክዎ | ወቀተልነ | ሰዕኔ | ወጸወንቴ  
 15 ወጌማ | ወዘሕተን | አርበዕቱ | አን  
 16 ጋደ | ወአጎዝነ | አሊታሃ | ምስለ | ክ  
 17 ልኡ | ደቁ | ወኮነ | ቅትለ | ዕድ | ዘአ[ፋ]  
 18 ን | ጅጅ፫ | ወአንስት | ጀጅጅ | ወኮነ | ጁጅጅ |  
 19 ዴዎ | ዕድ | ወአንስት | ክበበ | ገወዘ | ዕ  
 20 ድ | ጭ | ወአንስት | ወደቁቅ | ጆጆጅ | ወ  
 21 ኮነ | ጀጅጅ | ምሀርከ | ለሀም | ፫ጭጊጆጆጆ  
 22 ጃጂ | አንስሳ | ዐውድ | ጅጅጅጅ | ወተ  
 23 መይጡ | ዳጎነ | ምስለ | አሕዛቢሆሙ |  
 24 ወተከሉ | መንበረ | በዝዩ | በሠዶ | ወ  
 25 አመሐ | ፀንዎ | ለዐስተር | ወለብሔ  
 26 ር | ወለምድር | ለእመ | በዘ | ነሠቶ | ወ  
 27 ነቀሎ | ውኣቱ | ወብሔሩ | ወዘመዱ | ለ  
 28 ይትነቀል | ወይትነሠት | አብሔሩ |  
 29 ለይሢእ | ወቀፋኡ | አኩቴት | ለመሕ  
 30 ርም | ዘወለዶሙ | ለሀም | ጆ | ወዴዎ | ሃ |

TRANSLATION

1 'Ēzānā, the son of 'Ella 'Amīdā, of the family of  
 2 Ḥalēn, King of Aksūm, and of Ḥemēr (Ḥimyār),  
 3 and of Raydān, and of Sab' and of Saī-  
 4 ḥēn, and of Ṣeyāmō, and of Begā, and of Kāsū,  
 5 the son of Maḥram, who cannot be conquered by the  
 6 enemy. He made war on the Saranē, whose kingdom is 'A-  
 7 fān, after they had fought against us and killed a merchant  
 8 caravan. And then we made war upon them, first of all  
 9 we sent armies, the army of Maḥazā, and  
 10 the army of Dākuēn, and the army of Ḥarā, and then we  
 11 ourselves followed, and we encamped at the place where  
 12 the troops were assembled in 'Ālāhā, and we made our  
 soldiers

## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

- 13 set out from there. And they killed, and made prisoners,  
and despoiled  
14 them. And we attacked Sa'nē, and Şawantē,  
15 and Gēmā, and Zahtan, four  
16 peoples (or, tribes), and we took prisoner 'Alitā with  
17 his two children. And a slaughter took place, of the men of  
'Afān  
18 503, and women 202, in all 705.  
19 Of his camp-followers there were taken prisoners, men  
20 40, and women and children 165, in all  
21 205. As spoil were carried off 31,900 and  
22 57 cattle, baggage animals 827. And [the king]  
23 returned in safety together with his people.  
24 And he set up a throne here in Shādo, and  
25 committed himself to the protection of 'Astar, and Beḥēr,  
26 and Meder (the Earth). If there be anyone who would  
overthrow him  
27 and remove him, that person, and his land, and his race,  
28 shall be overthrown and removed, and he shall be rooted  
out  
29 of his country. And he (*i.e.* the king) offered as a thank-  
offering to  
30 Maḥram, who had begotten him, 100 cattle and 50 prisoners.

The last campaign of 'Ēzānā, which is made known to us by the important inscription in Ethiopic published by Littmann (*Aksūm*, Bd. IV. No. 11), seems to have been the greatest of all his military expeditions. It was directed against the Nōbā, *i.e.* the people who dwelt on the southern side of the Takaze or Atbarā, and on the Sēdā or Nile, and against the Kāsū or Kushites, or peoples of the regions which had once formed the kingdom of the Meroitic kings and queens. The Kāsū were old offenders, and the inscription suggests that they had been made subjects of the king of Aksūm at an earlier period, either by 'Ēzānā himself or one of his predecessors. The fragment of a Greek inscription found at Meroë and published by Sayce (*Trans. Soc. Bible Arch.*, vol. VIII. 1909, p. 190) states that a king of Aksūm had been to Meroë, and laid waste the country, and set up a statue to Ares, and that king

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

may quite well have been 'Ēzānā. Both the Nōbā and the Kāsū had rebelled, and 'Ēzānā was obliged to set out and crush the rebellion with a strong hand. The Nōbā had attacked the peoples of Mangurtō, Khasā and other peoples who were under the protection of the king of Aksūm, and believing that 'Ēzānā would never take the trouble to cross the Atbarā, continued to do so with impunity. Thrice had they sworn with solemn oaths, presumably to 'Ēzānā, not to attack those peoples, and thrice had they broken their oaths, and had killed the Black Folk and the Red Folk without the smallest justification or provocation. Complaints of their outrages had been made to 'Ēzānā at Aksūm, and he had sent his officers to enquire into the matter, and when these reached the territory of the Nōbā, the rebels disarmed them by taking away their weapons of defence, and stole their goods and stripped them of everything they had. Time after time 'Ēzānā warned them, but his warnings fell on deaf ears, and their only answer was to curse the king and to rob and steal and murder as before.

'Ēzānā marched to the Atbarā, and engaged them at the ford of Kemalkē, but the fight was inconclusive, for they broke and fled, thinking in this way to escape his vengeance. But 'Ēzānā pursued them and continued to do so for twenty-three days, during which he killed many rebels, and took prisoners and seized such spoil as came in his way; and his soldiers brought back to him after their attacks more prisoners and spoil. The Nōbā included people who were not merely naked savages, for some of them dwelt in houses made of sun-dried bricks, and some in houses made of reeds, and there were statues of gods in their temples. The Aksūmite soldiers seized the Nōbā's stores of grain and food and their copper and iron and bronze (?) and their cotton trees and cast them all into the Nile. Thus it is clear that some of the Nōbā were civilized to a certain extent, for they possessed the art of working in metals, and knew how to make bricks and to build houses. The mention of the cotton tree ታጥ ጠጥ is of great interest, and suggests that the Nōbā cultivated the cotton tree (*Gossypium arboreum*) systematically, though it has always grown wild in many parts of Abyssinia and tropical Africa. The word survives in Amharic under the form of ታጥጥ ጠጥ, and Guidi identifies it with *Gossypium vitifolium punctatum* (*Vocabolario*, col. 834). A fight took place on the Nile



## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

also, and many men "died in the water," *i.e.* were drowned. It seems that many of the Nōbā tried to escape in boats, for those which 'Ēzānā's soldiers sank were crowded with both men and women.

Two chiefs, called Yesakā and Būtālē, who, disguised as merchants and mounted on she-camels, came as spies, and the notable who was with them, were captured by the king himself, and put to death. Five other chiefs called Danōkō, Dagalē, 'Anakō, Hawārī, and Karkarā and one priest were also captured, and were put to death. The priest was wounded in the general fight which took place at the capture of the party, and the soldiers stripped him of his clothing and took from him the little gold case in which he kept his fetish, and which was probably fastened to his body by a silver chain. After this 'Ēzānā fought a battle with the Kāsū at the mouth of the Atbarā and captured many prisoners. On the following day he sent his troops up the Nile, and they destroyed the cities of 'Alwā and Darō, and laid waste all that portion of the island of Meroé. They killed many people, and captured prisoners, and threw numbers of the natives into the Nile, and then returned in peace, having conquered their foes by the might of the Lord of Heaven. Then 'Ēzānā sent his soldiers down the Nile to lay waste the country of the Nōbā, who had captured the towns of Negūs (?), Tabītō and Fertōtī; they advanced northwards as far as the country of the Red Nōbā, and then returned in peace. This done 'Ēzānā set up a throne at a place near the junction of the Atbarā with the Nile, probably on the right bank, where are the ruins of the famous old town of Ad-Dānias, in the name of the Lord of Heaven, Who, he acknowledges, had made him king. And to Him he gave thanks for his victory, and for what He had given to him, *viz.*, 1387 men and women and children, killed or made prisoners, 10,560 cattle, and 51,050 sheep. In the last lines of the inscription there is no mention of 'Ēzānā committing himself and his throne to the care and protection of 'Astar, Beḥēr, or Meder, and no record of a gift of lands and cattle and prisoners to Maḥram, such as we find in the inscriptions which were set up by him when a pagan. On the contrary he readily admits that the Lord of Heaven had helped him, and he beseeches Him to stablish him in the kingdom which He had given to him. And he promises the Lord of Heaven that

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

he will rule his people with righteousness and justice and will not oppress them. Still more remarkable, he prays that his people will protect the throne which he has set up to the Lord of Heaven, and the land on which it rests. But following this prayer comes the curse on the man who shall overthrow or destroy the throne, and the old threat that he and his seed shall be rooted up out of the land. A transcript of Littmann's text of this very important inscription and a translation are here given.

### INSCRIPTION OF 'EZĀNĀ (AIZANES) WHEN A CHRISTIAN

(Littmann, No. 11)

- 1 [በ]ጎይለ | እግዚአ | ሰማይ | [ዘበ] | ሰማይ | ወምድር | መዋኢ |  
ለዘ | ኮነ | ጌ
- 2 [ዘ]ኛ | ወልደ | አሌ | ዐሚዳ | ብአስዩ | ሐልን | ንጉሠ | አክሱም |  
ወዘ | ሕሚ
- 3 [ር] | ወዘ | ረይዳን | ወዘ | ሰበእ | ወዘ | ሰልሔን | ወዘ | ጽዮም |  
ወዘ | ብጋ | ወ
- 4 [ዘ] | ካሱ | ንጉሠ | ነገሥት | ወልደ | አሌ | ዐሚዳ | ዘአይትመ  
ዋእ | ለፀር |
- 5 [በ]ጎይለ | እግዚአ | ሰማይ | ዘወሀበኒ | እግዚአ | ዘለ | ዘልፍ |  
ፍጹ[መ | ]
- 6 [ይነግ]ሥ | ዘአይትመዋ[እ] | ለፀር | ቅድሚዩ | አይቁም | ፀር |  
ወድጎሬዩ |
- 7 [አ]ይትሉ | ፀር | በጎይለ | እግዚአ | ኩሉ | ፀበእኩ | ኖባ | ሱባ |  
አዕረረ[ ] |
- 8 [አ]ሕዛባ | ኖባ | ሱቤ | ተመከሐ | ወኢይደለዉ | እምተከዚ |  
ይቤ | እሕዛ
- 9 [በ] | ኖባ | ሱቤ | ገፋዐ | እሕዛባ | መንጉርቶ | ወጎሳ | ወባርያ |  
ወጸሊ[ም | ]
- 10 [ሰ]ብአ | ቀይሕ | ፀብአ | ወአማሰነ | ከዕባ | ወሥልስ | ለመሐ  
ላሁ | [ወኢ.]
- 11 [አ]ክሬዎ | ይቀትል | አግዋሪሁ | ወተንባለነ | ወሐዋርያነ | ዘፈነ |
- 12 ውኩ | ሎቱ | ይስምዕዎ | ሄዶሙ | ወበርበርሙ | ንዋዮሙ | ወሰ  
ረቆሙ |

THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

- 13 [ከጊዜ]ንምሙ | ሶቤ | ልኢክየኒ | ኢሰምዐኒ | ወአበየ | ጎደጎ |  
 ወሐመየ |
- 14 ወተግለፈ | እምዝ | ፀበእኩምሙ | ወተንሠእኩ | በጎይለ |  
 እግዚአ |
- 15 ብሔር | ወቀተልኩ | በተከዚ | በመዕድተ | ከመልኬ | ወእምዝ |  
 ጉዳ | ወ
- 16 ኢቆሙ | ወተለውኩ | ወትጎ | ዕሥራ | ወሠሉሰ | መዋዕለ |  
 ጅሮ | እንዘ | እ
- 17 ቀትሎ | ወእዲውዎ | ወእመሀርከ | በውእደ | ጎደርኩ | እንዘ |  
 ዲዋ | ወ
- 18 ምሀርከ | ያገብእ | እሕዛብየ | ዘወፈረ | እንዘ | አውዲ | አህጉሪሁ |  
 19 ዘንድቅ | ወዘ | ሐሠር | ወይበረብሩ | እክሎ | ወብርቶ | ወጎጺኖ |  
 ወና[ሕ]
- 20 ሰ | ወያማስኩ | ሠዕለ | አብያቲሁ | ወመዛግብተ | እክል | ወጡጥ |  
 ወያ
- 21 ጸድፍዎ | ውስተ | ፈለገ | ሲዳ | ወብዙጎ | ዘሞተ | በውስተ[ ] |  
 ማይ | ዘኢ[ያ]
- 22 አምር | ጉልቆ | ወእንዘ | እሕማሪሆሙ | ያሰጥሙ | እንዘ |  
 ምልእ | ሰብ
- 23 እ | ውስቴቱ | አንስት | ወዕድ | ወዲውኩ | መገብተ | ከልኤተ |  
 ዪ | እለ |
- 24 መጽኑ | አዕይንተ | እንዘ | ይጸዕኑ | አርኩብተ | ወአስማቲሆሙ |  
 25 ይሰካ | ፩ | በታሌ | ፩ | ወአንገቤናዌ | ካብረ | ፩ | ወእለ |  
 ሞቱ (?) | መገብተ |
- 26 ደኖኮ | ፩ | ደገሌ | ፩ | አነኮ | ፩ | ሐዋሬ | ፩ | ከርከራ | ፩ | ማሪ  
 ሆሙ | ፩ | [አቀኝ]
- 27 ሰሉ | ወሰለብዎ | ቅዳደ | ብሩር | ወሕቀተ | ወርቅ | ኮነ | መገ  
 ብተ | እለ |
- 28 ሞቱ | ፩ | ወማሪ | ፩ | ወበጸሕኩ | ካሱ | እንዘ | እቀትሎሙ |  
 ወእዲ[ው]ምሙ | በ
- 29 መጎበርተ | አፍላግ | ዘሴዳ | ወተከዚ | ወበሳኒተ | በጸሕኩ |  
 ፈነው
- 30 [ኩ] | መራደ | ሰርዌ | መሐዛ | ወሰርዌ | ሐራ | ወደመወ | ወፈ  
 ልሐ | ወጽራኝ |

ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

- 31 [መ]ለዕልተ | ሲዳ | አህጉረ | ንድቅ | ወዘ | ሐሠር | አስማተ |  
አህጉራህ |
- 32 ዘንድቅ | አልዋ | ፩ | ደሮ | ፩ | ወቀተሉ | ወጊወዉ | ወአጽደፉ |  
ውስቴተ |
- 33 ማይ | ወዳጎነ | አተዉ | አፍሪሆሙ | ፀሮሙ | ወመዊአሙ | በጎ  
ይለ | እ[ግ]
- 34 [ዚ]አ | ብሔር | ወአምኔህ | ፈነውኩ | ሰርዌ | ሐሴን | ወሰርዌ |  
ለኬን | ወ
- 35 ሰርዌ | ሰበራት | ወፈልሐ | ወጽራእ | መትሕተ | ሲዳ | አህጉረ |  
ኖባ | ዘ
- 36 ሐሠር | ፩ | ንጉስ | ፩ | አህጉረ | ንድ(?)ቅ | ዘካሱ | ዘኖባ | ነሥአ |  
ተቢቶ | ፩
- 37 ፍርቶቲ | ፩ | ወበጽሑ | እስከ | ደወለ | ኖባ | ቀይሕ | ወዳጎነ |  
አተዉ | እ
- 38 ሕዛብዩ | ጊውዎሙ | ወቀቲሎሙ | ወመሀሪኮሙ | በጎይለ | እግ  
ዚአ | ሰ
- 39 ማይ | ወተከልኩ | መንበረ | ውስቴተ | መጎበርተ | አፍላግ |  
ዘሲዳ | ወ
- 40 ዘተከዜ | አንጻረ | ሀገረ | ንድቅ | ዘውስጠ | ዛደሴት | ዘወሀበኒ | እ
- 41 ግዚአ | ሰማይ | ጌዋ | ዕድ | ፪፻፲፬ | ጌዋ | አንስት | ፬፻፲፭ | ኮነ |  
፯፻፳፬
- 42 ወቅትለ | ዕድ | ፯፻፪ | ቅትለ | አንስት | ወደቂቅ | ፻፶፯ [ | ] ኮነ |  
፯፻
- 43 ፶፰ | ወኮነ | ጌዋ | ወቅትል | ፲፻፫፻፹፯ | ወምሀርካ | ለህም  
፱፭፻
- 44 ፰ [ | ] ወበግዕ | ፭፻፲፻፶ | ወተከልኩ | መንበረ | በዝዩ | በሠዶ |  
በጎይ
- 45 ለ | እግዚአ | ሰማይ | ዘውእቱ | አርደአኒ | ወወሀበኒ | መግንሥ  
ተ *sic* | እ
- 46 ግዚአ | ሰማይ | የጽንዕ | መንግሥትዩ | ወከመ | ዮም | ሞአ  
ሊተ | ፀርዩ [ | ]
- 47 ለይማእ | ሊተ | ወእደ | ሐርኩ | ከመ | ዮም | ሞአ | ሊተ | ወአ  
ግነዩ | ሊተ | ፀ
- 48 ርዩ | በጽድቅ | ወበርትዕ | እንዘ | ኢአጌምፅ | እሕዛባ | ወአመሕፀ

## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

49 ኑ | ዘመንበረ | ዘተከልኩ | ለእግዚአ | ሰማይ | ዘአንገሠኝ | ወለፆ  
 50 ድር | ዘይጸውሮ | ለእመቤ | ዘነቀሎ | ወአማሰኖ | ወነውቶ |  
     ወ-እቱ | ወ  
 51 ዘመዱ | ይሠረ[ው] | ወይጎነቀል | እብሔር | ይሠረው | ወተከ  
     ልኩ | ዘመ  
 52 ንበረ | በጎይለ | እግዚአ | ሰማይ

### TRANSLATION

- 1 By the power of the Lord of Heaven, Who in heaven and upon the earth is mightier than everything which exists,
- 2 'Ēzānā, the son of 'Ella 'Amīdā, a native of Ḥālen, king of Aksūm and of
- 3 Hemēr (Himyār), and of Raydān, and of Saba, and of Saḥēn, and of Seyāmō, and of Begā, and of
- 4 Kāsū, King of kings, the son of 'Ella 'Amīdā, who is invincible to the enemy.
- 5 By the might of the Lord of Heaven, Who hath made me lord, Who to all eternity, the Perfect One,
- 6 reigns, Who is invincible to the enemy, no enemy shall stand before me, and after me
- 7 no enemy shall follow. By the might of the Lord of All, I made war upon Nōbā, for the peoples of Nōbā had rebelled and
- 8 had made a boast of it. And "they (*i.e.* the Aksūmites) will not cross the river Takaze," said the peoples
- 9 of Nōbā. And they were in the habit of attacking the peoples of Mangurtō, and Khasā, and Bāryā, and the Blacks,
- 10 and of making war upon the Red peoples. And twice and thrice had they broken their solemn oaths, and had
- 11 killed their neighbours mercilessly (or, without sufficient reason), and they had stripped bare and stolen the properties of our deputies and messengers which I had
- 12 sent to them to enquire into their thefts, and had stolen from them
- 13 their weapons of defence. And as I had sent warnings to them, and they would not hearken to me, and they refused to cease from their [evil] deeds, and heaped abuse upon me

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

- 14 and then betook themselves to flight, I made war upon them.  
And I rose up in the might of the Lord of the  
15 Land (*i.e.* God), and I fought with them on the Takaze, at  
the ford of Kemalkē. Thereupon they took to flight, and  
would not  
16 make a stand. And I followed after the fugitives for twenty  
and three—23—days,  
17 killing [some], and making prisoners [others], and capturing  
spoil wherever I tarried. Prisoners and  
18 spoil my people who had marched into the country brought  
back to me. Meanwhile I burnt their towns [both]  
19 those built of brick and those built of reeds, and [my soldiers]  
carried off its food, and its copper, and its iron, and its  
20 brass (?), and they destroyed the statues (or pictures) of their  
houses (*i.e.* temples), and the treasuries of food, and the  
cotton trees, and  
21 cast them into the River Sīdā. And there were many [men]  
who died in the water, their  
22 number being unknown to me; and they (*i.e.* the soldiers)  
sunk their ships in the river whilst crowded with people,  
23 there being on them both women and men. And I captured  
two chieftains—2—who  
24 had come as spies riding on she-camels, and their names  
were  
25 Yesakā—I—[and] Būtālē—I—; and I captured an Angabē-  
nāwī nobleman—I—. And these died: the chieftains  
26 Danōkō—I—, Dagalē—I—, 'Anakō—I—, Ḥawārī—I—,  
Karkarā—I—, their lord (*i.e.* priest)—I—, whom [the  
27 soldiers] had wounded, and they took away from him a  
*kedāda* of silver and a small case [made of] gold. The  
chieftains who  
28 died were five—5— and one priest—I—. And I came to  
Kāsū and I fought a battle and made prisoners of its  
people at  
29 the junction of the Rivers Sīdā and Takaze. And the day  
after I arrived I sent out  
30 to raid the country, the army Maḥazā, and the army Ḥarā,  
and Damawa, and Falḥa and Ṣerā'

## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

- 31 upstream of Sidā, and the cities built of brick and those of  
 reeds. The names of the cities
- 32 built of bricks were 'Alwā—1—[and] Darō—1—. And they  
 killed, and captured prisoners, and cast [people] into the
- 33 water, and they returned safe and sound, having terrified  
 their enemies and conquered them by the might of the Lord
- 34 of the Land. And after that I sent the army of Ḥalēn, and  
 the army of Lakēn, and
- 35 the army of Sabarāt, and Falḥa and Ṣerā' down the Sidā  
 [against] the towns of Nōbā which are [made of]
- 36 reeds—4 towns—Negūs—1—. The towns built of bricks  
 which the Nōbā had taken were Tabītō—1—[and]
- 37 Fertōtī—1. And my peoples arrived at the frontier of the  
 red Nōbā and they returned safe and sound,
- 38 having captured prisoners and slain the Nōbā and taken  
 spoil from them by the might of the Lord of
- 39 Heaven. And I planted (*i.e.* set up) a throne in that country  
 at the place where the Rivers Sidā and
- 40 Takaze join opposite the town with brick houses which.....  
 the island. The things which has given me
- 41 the Lord of Heaven are: men captives 214, women captives  
 415, total of captives 629.
- 42 Men slain 602, women and children slain 156, total of slain  
 700 [and]
- 43 58. Total of prisoners and slain 1387. The spoil: cattle 10,500  
 44 [and] 60, sheep 51,050. And I planted (*i.e.* set up) a throne  
 here in Shādo by the might of
- 45 the Lord of Heaven, Who has helped me and given me  
 sovereignty.
- 46 May the Lord of Heaven make strong my kingdom! And  
 as He has this day conquered for me my enemy
- 47 may He conquer for me wheresoever I go. And as He has  
 this day conquered for me, and has overthrown for me my
- 48 enemy, [I will rule] the people with righteousness and  
 justice, and will not oppress them. And may they preserve  
 (or, keep in safety)
- 49 this throne which I have planted (*i.e.* set up) for the Lord of  
 Heaven, Who has made me king, and

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

50 the earth which carries it! And if there be anyone who shall  
remove it, and destroy it, and overthrow it, he and  
51 his kinsfolk shall be rooted out, shall be removed from the  
land and be rooted out. And I have planted (*i.e.* set up)  
52 this throne by the might of the Lord of Heaven.

The most important fact that comes to light from the inscriptions of 'Ēzānā is that he was the king of Aksūm who, about the year 340, embraced Christianity and made his kingdom Christian. This historical fact and the native Abyssinian tradition can be made to harmonize, if in any way the names 'Abrehā and 'Aṣbehā can be regarded as names of 'Ēzānā. 'Abrehā can hardly be a corruption of 'Ēzānā, but it may be a second name of this king, and we know that many Abyssinian kings had two names, and in late times three. We also know that King Kālēb was also called "'Ella 'Aṣbehā," and 'Aṣbehā or 'Ella 'Aṣbehā may have been a second, or third name of 'Ēzānā. The Abyssinians also say that 'Abrehā and 'Aṣbehā rebuilt Aksūm, but this is what 'Ēzānā did, and there cannot have been three kings ruling at Aksūm at the same time and all engaged in rebuilding the city. 'Abrehā, 'Aṣbehā and 'Ēzānā may be one and the same person, but if they are it is very strange that the Chronicles never mention the name 'Ēzānā or include it in their lists of kings.

Little more is known now of the history of Abyssinia during the period 360–580 than was known to Dillmann, whose description of the material available was comprehensive and practically final. (See his *Ueber die Anfänge des axumitischen Reichs*, Berlin, 1879, and *Zur Geschichte des axumitischen Reichs im vierten bis sechsten Jahrhundert*, Berlin, 1880.) The names of nine or ten kings are found on coins, viz. Gersem, Yathliā (?), Ochlas (?), Anaapheon (?), 'Ella Gabaz, Joēl, Wazēnā (?), 'Armaḥ or 'Armaḥ Sagad, Ḥatazā and Mḥygsn, but of these only two, 'Ella Gabaz and 'Armaḥ, are found in the King Lists. The Chronicle published by Basset (p. 97) and a King List in Brit. Mus. MS. Orient. 821 say that

'Abrehā begot 'Asfeḥ.

'Asfeḥ begot 'Arfed.

'Arfed begot 'Amsē.

'Amsē begot Sala'adōbā.

Sala'adōbā begot 'Al'āmēdā.



## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

In other words only five kings reigned between A.D. 360 and 480, and of these little or nothing is known. But from other Chronicles we learn that during this period several other kinglets ruled over a part of Abyssinia. Among these were 'Ella 'Abrehā, 'Ella 'Aṣbehā and 'Ella Shāhel, three brothers who reigned together from about 356-370; they divided the day into three equal parts, and each king was king absolute during his part of the day. After 'Ella Shāhel we have 'Ella 'Adhānā (14 years), 'Ella Rete'a (1 year), 'Ella 'Asfeḥ (1 year), 'Ella 'Aṣbehā (5 years), 'Ella 'Amidā (16 years), 'Ella 'Abrehā (6 months), 'Ella Shāhel (2 months), and 'Ella Gabōz or Gōbāz (2 years, about A.D. 392). It is said that 'Ella Gōbāz killed his predecessor and married by force the princess 'Admās, and proclaimed himself king. He became infatuated with the beautiful pagan queen of a neighbouring district who was called Lāb, and married her. A brother of Queen 'Admās rose up and slew 'Ella Gōbāz and Queen Lāb, and became king under the name of 'Ella Shāhel (III?), or 'Ella Sēhal አሳሳክ (A.D. 394). He was followed by 'Ella 'Arbeḥa and 'Ella 'Adhānā (16 years), 'Ella Ṣaḥam (28 years), 'Ella 'Āmidā (12 years), 'Ella Shāhel (2 years), 'Ella Ṣebāḥ (2 years), 'Ella Ṣaḥam (15 years), 'Ella Gōbāz (21 years), 'Agābē and Lēwī (2 years, A.D. 474-5?). It will be seen that many of these kinglets bore the same name, and these should be distinguished by the numbers I, II, etc., but it is, owing to the confusion in the King Lists and the various spellings of the names, impossible to be certain about the order in which they succeeded. Lēwī's successor, 'Ella 'Amidā (IV?), reigned 11 or 14 years.

### 'AL'ĀMĒDĀ, OR 'ELLA 'AMĪDĀ

The principal event in the reign of 'Al'Āmēdā was the arrival of the Nine Saints from Byzantium (Rōmyā), who reformed the Faith. These were Abbā 'Alēf, Abbā Ṣeḥmā, Abbā 'Aragāwī (or Michael), Abbā 'Afṣē, Abbā Garimā, Abbā Panṭalēwōn, Abbā Līḳānōs, Abbā Gūbā and Abbā Yem'ātā. They came, as Guidi has shown, from Syria or that neighbourhood, and were Monophysites, and it was they who translated the Scriptures into Gē'ez or Ethiopic, built churches and monasteries, and established Christianity on a firm base in Abyssinia. Salt, and others following him, have

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

confounded the Nine Saints mentioned above with the company of ecclesiastics who went with John, the Almoner of the Church of St John at Alexandria, to Arabia, *not* to Abyssinia. According to Theophanes (*Chronographia*, vol. I. p. 260 ff.) and Assemānī (*Bibl. Orient.*, tom. I. p. 260 ff.), a king of Ethiopia called Aidog, or Aidoug, or Adad marched into Arabia and defeated Dinmus, or Damianus, the Jewish king of the Ḥimyarites, after a fierce battle. He then wrote to the Emperor Justinian and asked him to send a bishop and a number of priests into Ḥimyār to convert the people to Christianity. John of Alexandria was chosen by the emperor, and he and his party went to Arabia according to his instructions. Theophanes says they went there in 521, and they may have done so, but the fact is that he has got his names and facts all wrong. El-'Aṣbehā, or Kāleb, king of Aksūm, *did* fight a battle in Arabia against the Jewish king Dhū Nuwās, but it was many years later, as we shall see, and he did so because Dhū Nuwās was persecuting the Christians of Najrān. Many kings of Aksūm found it necessary to go to Arabia and chastise the kings of Yaman and Ḥimyār because they plundered the royal trading caravans and so robbed the king of Abyssinia of his revenue, but the story told by Theophanes is probably apocryphal. The Nine Saints, in reality, being dissatisfied with the decisions of the great Councils at Ephesus (431) and Chalcedon (451), fled to Abyssinia for refuge, and it was no royal command that sent them there. Tradition says that Abbā Garimā was taken from Alexandretta to Abyssinia in a single night by the Archangel Gabriel, and that later he was translated to heaven. Abbā Līḡānōs is said to have been the priest who baptized Queen Candace, so that when he came to Abyssinia with 'Aragāwī he must have been about 420 years old. This is a good example of the anachronisms which are met with in Ethiopic literature.

'Al-'Āmēdā was succeeded by Yā'qōb (Jacob) and Dāwīt (David), who reigned together (3 years), 'Armāh I (?), who reigned 14 years, 6 months and 10 days (489-503), and by Zītānā (2 years). This last king has, curiously enough, been confounded by some writers with 'Ēzānā, who reigned about 150 years before the time of Zītānā, and they have attributed to him the conquest of Ḥimyār, Nōbā, and Kūsh and other countries, which it was quite impossible

## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

for him to effect in his short reign of two years (504-5). An extraordinary native tradition says that Zītānā was followed by one Yā'qōb, who because of his shocking cruelties and wickedness was called "'Arwē," *i.e.* "Beast" or "Serpent," and who reigned 9 years. The country was delivered from this monster by 'Ella 'Aṣbehā (IV?), in whom Ludolf rightly saw the "Elesbaan" of Cosmas (McCrindle, Bk. II. 141 (p. 55)) and the "Elesbas, Elesbaas, and Elesboas" of ecclesiastical writers. 'Ella 'Aṣbehā marked the defile in which the monster lived, and he lighted a huge fire at each end of it, and lined the two sides with rows of soldiers. 'Arwē made a frantic effort to escape by leaping through the fire at one end of the defile, and as he did so 'Ella 'Aṣbehā slew him with his sword, and became king about A.D. 514.

'ELLA 'AṢBEHĀ አለ፡አጽብሐ፡ = Ἐλλατ[ζ]βααο, or Ἐλεσβααν,  
ALSO KNOWN AS KĀLĒB

'Ella 'Aṣbehā was a son of Zītānā, and reigned from 514 to 542. He is also called Constantine ቁስጠግጢኖስ፡, and David, and Kālēb ካሌብ፡. He had two sons, Bēta 'Esrā'ēl ቤተ፡አስራኤል፡ and Gabra Maṣkal ገብረ፡መስቀል፡. It has already been seen in the inscriptions of 'Ēzānā that the Abyssinians in his reign claimed hegemony not only over the parts of Arabia near the Straits of Bāb al-Mandab, but also over Ḥīmyār, and they continued to do so in the 6th century A.D. In 523 Ḥīmyār was ruled by an Arab, who had adopted the Jewish religion, called Dhū Nuwās, and this vassal of 'Ella 'Aṣbehā was striving by every means in his power to free himself from the overlordship of the king of Abyssinia. Dhū Nuwās hated Christians in general, and especially those who lived in Nāgrān ኖግራን፡, a populous city of Ḥīmyār, and he and his officers slew men, women and children mercilessly, burnt their houses and crops, and inflicted frightful cruelties on them. Neither the old nor the young was spared, and Christian virgins were raped, tortured and burnt with every refinement of cruelty that malice and cunning could suggest. The news of these atrocities was carried swiftly to all parts of the Christian East. Timothy, Patriarch of Alexandria, wrote to 'Ella 'Aṣbehā, and incited him to wage war against Dhū Nuwās. Meanwhile a Jew called Daus went to Dhū Nuwās and

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

told him that the people of Nāgrān had killed two of his sons, and Dhū Nuwās set out forthwith for Nāgrān and massacred every one he could find. But a native of Nāgrān managed to escape, and he fled to 'Ella 'Aṣbehā and described the massacre to him, and showed the remains of an Evangeliarium, which he had saved from the fire. The king said, "I have enough men, but no ships. I will write to the Emperor [Justin] and ask him to send me ships to transport my soldiers to Arabia." As he knew that the Greeks were enemies of the Persians, to whom the Ḥimyarites had allied themselves, he felt sure that he would receive a favourable answer. For this story as told by Hishām ibn Muḥammad, see Noldeke, *Geschichte der Perser*, Leyden, 1879, p. 187. 'Ella 'Aṣbehā collected an army of 120,000 men, and Justin sent 60 ships to the port of Gabaza, the modern Gamēz, near Adulis. 'Ella 'Aṣbehā sent 15,000 Abyssinians by land to prepare a place for disembarking, but after thirty days' march over the mountains they failed to appear, and were of no assistance. At length, at Pentecost in the year 525 'Ella 'Aṣbehā embarked with his soldiers, and in spite of the obstacles which Dhū Nuwās put in the way succeeded in landing with all his army. He attacked the Ḥimyarites with success, and marched on, took the town of Ṭakhar, the Yamanite capital, seized Dhū Nuwās, wounded him with his own hand, and the Jewish chief rode his horse into the sea and was drowned. 'Ella 'Aṣbehā then re-established Christianity in the land, and built churches, and made a Christian called Abramios governor of Yaman, and gave him a force of 10,000 men to keep order in the country. The chief authorities for the history of the martyrs of Nāgrān are the "Martyrdom of Saint Arethas" in Greek, and the Ethiopic texts published with Portuguese translations by F. M. E. Pereira in his *Historia dos Martyres de Nagran*, Lisbon, 1899. See also Guidi, *La Lettera di Simone* (Acad. dei Lincei, tom. VII. p. 509); Carpentier, *De SS. Aretha et sociis martyribus Negranae* in the *Acta Sanctorum*, October, tom. x. p. 728 ff.

In the King Lists we read "Tāzēnā begot Kālēb. By the prayer of Abbā Panṭalēwōn the earth split open when he was waging war against the king of Sābā, the Jew, who slew the martyrs of Nāgrān, and whom God brought into the hand of Kālēb. He took vengeance for the blood of these martyrs, and he

## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

conquered him, and killed him, and destroyed all his army and towns." The Ethiopic text of this extract is given by Pereira (*op. cit.*, p. xlii) from the Life of Abbā 'Aragāwī. A legend common in Abyssinia explains the splitting of the earth thus: Kālēb wanted to get into Arabia but had no ships in which to cross the Red Sea. Abbā Panṭalēwōn prayed to God, Who split the earth, and Kālēb descended into it and traversed a passage under the sea until he came to the neighbourhood of Mount Sinai. Here he came up to the surface and made his way to the sea-coast, where he found a ship, and so was able to reach the Ḥimyār territory. He fought a great battle, conquered his enemy, who is here called Fīnḥās, **ፊንክስ**, i.e. Phineas, and killed him and restored the authority of the Abyssinians in Arabia. (See the *Eth. Synaxarium*, Genbōt 20.) Much light on the period of the introduction of Christianity into Yaman is afforded by the Syriac work *Kethābhā dhe Ḥimyārāyē*, which has been edited by Prof. Axel Moberg of Lund, and a good summary of its contents by Conti Rossini will be found in the *Rivista*, Rome, 1922, tom. IX. p. 426 ff.

Having restored order in Yaman 'Ella 'Aṣbehā appointed as governor of Ḥimyār an Arab Christian called Ariāt, and made him agree to pay an annual tribute. This done he returned to Abyssinia with a vast amount of spoil, all of which he gave to his army. In 531 war broke out between Abramios, i.e. 'Ella 'Abrehā, governor of Yaman and Ariāt, governor of Ḥimyār, who decided to settle their dispute by a duel in the presence of their armies. During the fight Ariāt succeeded in slashing 'Abrehā across the face with his sword, and won the duel. As 'Abrehā ever after carried the mark of the sword cut on his face he was nicknamed " 'Abrehā the scarred" (Al-Ashrām). Soon after the duel 'Abrehā murdered Ariāt and so became the sole lord of Yaman, and refused to pay tribute to 'Ella 'Aṣbehā, whom Ṭabarī calls the "Nagāshī," i.e. **ነጋሥ**. Having made fruitless attempts to reduce 'Abrehā to submission the Nagāshī decided to confirm his authority, and made him king of Yaman. Thereupon 'Abrehā assumed the title of "King of Abyssinia."

Soon after 'Ella 'Aṣbehā returned to Aksūm, he retired from the world, and having sent his royal crown to Jerusalem to be suspended near the grave of our Lord, **ወላስጢሉ ርእሱ ፈነወ ጳጳሩ**

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

**ሳሌም፣ ከመ፣ ደስቅሉ፣ ገብ፣ መቃብረ፣ እግዚእነ፣**, he became a monk, and either assumed, or was given by his subjects the name of Kālēb. He was not the first king of Aksūm to bear this name, for the writer of the Periplus says that in his time (A.D. 56) the *Tύραννος* of Saue was called *Χολαιβος*. Several coins of 'Ella 'Aṣbeha are known and full descriptions of these will be found in Pereira, *Martyres de Nagran*, p. xlvi f., Littmann, *Aksūm*, Bd. I. p. 53; Schlumberger in *Rev. Numismatique*, 1886, p. 356; Prideaux in *Numismatic Chronicle*, 1884, p. 217, etc.

The place near Aksūm which has been said to be the entrance into the earth miraculously made for Kālēb is known to-day as "Enda Kālēb," or the tomb of Kālēb. It was first described by Tellez (*Historia*, Bk. I. chap. 32), and next by Lord Valentia (*Voyages*, vol. III. p. 80 f.) and Rūppell (*Reise*, Bd. II. p. 276), and was excavated by the German Expedition to Aksūm (Bd. I. p. 10 ff.). The "House of Kālēb" is approached by a sloping corridor about 25 feet long, and crossing a narrow hall or vestibule 24 feet long and 7 feet wide, the visitor sees in front of him three rectangular chambers, the walls of which descend into the ground to a considerable depth. Tradition says that Kālēb and his son Gabra Maṣkaḷ were buried here, but the good and massive work which is seen in many parts of these tombs suggests that they were excavated under Greek influence, and are pre-Christian. For a ground plan of the three chambers see Pereira, *op. cit.*, p. liv. In the *Liber Axumae* (ed. Conti Rossini, p. 5) mention is made of the house of Kālēb and of his son Gabra Maṣkaḷ, built in the heart of the earth, with its obelisks; its exterior is visible at the present day. The interior is said to be filled with gold and pearls, and the writer says that he has seen pearls brought out through the crevices in the rock by means of a stalk of grass moistened by spittle.

### BĒTA 'ESRĀ'ĒL ቤተ፣ እስራኤል፣

Bēta 'Esrā'ēl was the eldest son of Kālēb, and seems to have been the governor of Adwa (Adowa) during his father's lifetime, and it was he, probably, who was compelled to acknowledge 'Abrehā al-Ashrām as king of Yaman, and to admit his arrogant claims to sovereignty, at all events for a time. The Abyssinian

## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

Chronicles know nothing about him, and in some of the King Lists his name is altogether omitted. Coins of Betā 'Esrā'ēl were found by Parabeni.

GABRA MASKAL ገብረ መስቀል: the "Servant of the Cross"

Gabra Maṣḳal was the second son of Kālēb and succeeded his brother Bēta 'Esrā'ēl probably about 550. One King List says that he reigned 14 years, but some think that his reign was much longer, and believe that he did not die until between 570 and 580. He and his brother seem to have resigned themselves to their loss of the overlordship of Yaman, for 'Abrehā al-Ashrām, who had usurped the sovereignty in Arabia, had begun to attack the Ḥimyarites and others on his own account, and he did not share the loot which he took with the Nagāshī. There is little doubt that Gabra Maṣḳal would have gone to Yaman and crushed the usurper, but he had no ships, and there was no one ready to help him in this respect as his father was helped. Thus it fell out that when Justinian applied to him for help in diverting the silk caravans from Arabia to Abyssinia, he was obliged to confess that he had no navy. Gabra Maṣḳal was a devout Christian, and he endowed the Church at Aksūm which had been founded by 'Abrehā and 'Aṣbehā ('Ēzānā?), with many estates. Two of his great benefactions are described in the *Liber Axumae* (ed. Conti Rossini, p. 21). His reign was peaceful, and as he conducted no wars trade flourished and the country was prosperous. Thus he had abundant means at his disposal for building churches, and he is said to have built the church of Abbā Germā. The Chroniclers relate that during the reign of Gabra Maṣḳal, Yārēd, the deacon, compiled the great "Mazgabā Deggwā" or "Treasury of Hymns" of the Abyssinian Church. According to a legend he was taken up to Paradise where he learned the "plain song" of heaven, and when he returned to earth he taught it to the people. He grouped the hymns according to the seasons of the year, and he attached to each hymn notes indicating which of the three tones was to be used in singing it. He had a beautiful voice, and one day when he was singing to Gabra Maṣḳal, the king was so ravished by the sounds that he let his spear drop, and the head of it transfixed Yārēd's foot to the ground. Yārēd was so intent upon his singing that he never noticed

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

where the head of the spear was until his song was ended. Yārēd founded the Monastery of Dāmō, and became an anchorite in the desert of Samēn, where he died. For descriptions of the contents of the Deggwā ጊጊ see Wright, *Catalogue of the Ethiopic MSS.* No. 174, etc. Gabra Maṣṣal was buried in a tomb near that of Kālēb, and from the colossal size of the sarcophagus, which was seen by Bent (*Sacred City*, p. 194) and is described in detail by Littmann (*Aksūm*, Bd. II), it is thought that he was a man of enormous size. But this is very uncertain, for sarcophagi were made large enough to hold wooden coffins.

Abyssinia seems to have been peaceful enough during the reign of Gabra Maṣṣal, but in Arabia there was no peace. Ariāt, governor of Ḥimyār, was a belligerent Christian and he burned with desire either to convert the pagan Arabs who lived in and around Makkah (Mecca), or to destroy them and their city. His real object was to get possession of the offerings which the pilgrims made in Makkah. He made an attack upon Makkah, but failed to achieve his purpose and was driven off. Meanwhile 'Abrehā al-Ashrām, governor of Yaman, was fired with Christian zeal, and filled with the desire to prevent pilgrims going to Makkah, and with the object of providing a counter attraction for them, he built a "Ḳālīs," *i.e.* ἐκκλησία, in San'ā, the like of which existed nowhere else in the world. And he wrote to the Nagāshī, the king of Abyssinia, saying that he had built for him a church, the like of which had never been built before for any king, and that he would never rest until he had made the Arab pilgrims flock to it instead of to Makkah. He also wrote to the emperor and asked him to help him, and the emperor sent to Yaman artificers, and marble and mosaics, and the church was decorated with gold and colours. When the Arabs heard what 'Abrehā had written to the Nagāshī they were filled with wrath, and a certain man of the Fuḳaim, who belonged to the Malik branch of the Kināna tribe, went to Yaman, and having gained access to the innermost part of the church of 'Abrehā defiled it and departed. On hearing of this 'Abrehā was enraged, and he determined to go and destroy the temple of Makkah, and he ordered the Abyssinians to make ready for battle, and to set out on the way taking the elephants with them. On the road Dhū Naḡar and his people offered resistance, but his Arabs



## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

were vanquished and he was captured and brought before 'Abrehā, who spared his life.

The next to oppose 'Abrehā was Nufail ibn Ḥabīb Chath'ami, and the Shahrān and Nāhis Arabs, but his forces were scattered and he was also taken prisoner. 'Abrehā spared his life and made him his guide. When he came to Ṭāif, Mas'ūd and a host of the Thaḳīf Arabs came out and tendered their submission, and offered to go with him to help in the destruction of the Ka'bah at Makkah; in this way they saved their own temple Al-Lāt. When 'Abrehā reached Muḡhammas he sent an Abyssinian called Aswad ibn Maḳsūd with a company of horsemen against Makkah, and they drove back to him the cattle of the men of the Ḳoraish tribe, who were in charge of the city, and 200 camels that belonged to 'Abd al-Muttalib, the head of the Ḳoraish. Then 'Abrehā sent a Ḥimyarite called Honāta to Makkah, and bade him ask for the chief of the town and to tell him that 'Abrehā had not come to fight with the people of Makkah, but to destroy their temple. When 'Abd al-Muttalib heard this he declined to agree to 'Abrehā's proposal, even though the men of Makkah were not in a position to fight with him, and at Honāta's request went to 'Abrehā's camp. When 'Abd al-Muttalib arrived in the camp he saw his old friend Dhū Nafar there, and asked his help. Dhū Nafar said he could do nothing, but that he knew Unais, the leader of 'Abrehā's elephant, and would get him to obtain for him an audience of the king. This Unais did, and 'Abd al-Muttalib asked the king to give him back his 200 camels. And 'Abrehā said, "Dost thou speak of 200 camels and say no word about the sanctuary of thy father and thyself which I have come to destroy?" And 'Abd al-Muttalib said, "I am the lord of my camels, but the temple has its own Lord Who will protect it." Said the king, "He cannot protect it against me," and the chief of Makkah said, "That we shall find out; only give me back my camels"; after this he went back to the city and ordered all the people to fly to the hills and take refuge among the rocks. Then he fastened a ring on the door of the Ka'bah, and having called upon God to protect His House he and the other Ḳoraishites betook themselves to the hills. On the following day 'Abrehā set out on his elephant Maḡmūd to destroy the Ka'bah, but when he came in front of the building Nufail

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

secretly whispered in the ear of the elephant and told him to kneel down, which the beast promptly did, and nothing would make it stand up, for words and blows had no effect upon it. When they turned the elephant to the south, or north, or east, he would stand up, but towards the Ka'bah he would not go. At the same time God sent flocks of birds like swallows to Makkah, each carrying three stones, one in his beak and two in his claws, about the size of a cherry or a pea. They dropped these stones on 'Abrehā's soldiers, and wherever one fell on a man pustules broke out on him and his flesh putrefied and he died quickly. In other words smallpox broke out among 'Abrehā's troops, and when they realized the deadly character of the disease they fled with their king from Makkah. According to one Arab version of the story 'Abrehā was attacked by the disease and died before he returned to Yaman: according to another he returned to Yaman and continued to rule for several years. The elephants were attacked by the disease, and of the thirteen that accompanied 'Abrehā, only Maḥmūd, the elephant that refused to march against Makkah, escaped. 'Abd al-Muttalīb returned to his city and found the Ka'bah intact, and from that time onwards all the Arabs believed that a miracle had been wrought by God on its behalf. In Arab literature 'Abrehā's attack on the city is known as the "Battle of the Elephant" which took place in the year 570, the year in which Muḥammad was born. Mention of the episode is made in the *Ḳur'ān*, chap. cv, and see the notes on the subject in the *Introduction* to Sale's Translation. For the various accounts of Arab writers see Nöldeke, *Geschichte der Arabes*, p. 200 ff.

When the Nagāshī recognized 'Abrehā as king of Abyssinia and Yaman, he sent to the house of Abu Murra, the son of Dhū Jazan, and seized his wife Raiḥāna, the daughter of 'Alqama, and she bore him a son called Masrūk and a daughter called Basbāsa (Ibn Ishāq in Nöldeke, *op. cit.*, p. 197). But he had other sons, among them Abū Jaksūm, who succeeded to the throne after his death. Jaksūm was succeeded by his half brother Masrūk, who was killed by Wahriz in the reign of Khusrau, the son of Kawādh. The rule of the Abyssinian kings over Yaman lasted 72 years: Ariāṭ 20 years, 'Abrehā 23 years, Jaksūm 19 years, and Masrūk 12 years. Even before the death of Masrūk a rebellion broke out

## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

headed by Dhū Jazan, a Yamanite noble, and his son Saif ibn Dhū Jazan, the husband of the beautiful woman Raiḥāna, who bore him a son called Ma'adī-karib, led the Yamanites to victory. When he died the Yamanites under Saif ibn Dhū Jazan again rebelled, and after his death his son Ma'adī-karib succeeded in destroying the power of the Abyssinians in the land (578). When he had reigned about 20 years his Abyssinian bodyguard murdered him, and set upon the throne 'Abrehā, a son of Ariāṭ, who reigned for one or two years (598). The Yamanites then applied to the Persians for help, and Khusrau II Parwēz (590–Feb. 628) sent an army to assist them. The Persians came and seized the country for themselves, and the Abyssinians that were left in it were killed or driven out, and Yaman and Hīmyār became provinces of the Shah's Empire, and paid an annual tribute. Persian merchants followed the army into Arabia, and passed over into Abyssinia, where they greatly improved the trade of the country, not only to their own advantage but to that of the natives. Evidences of Persian influence are visible in buildings, and many of the patterns in textile fabrics that are most beloved by the natives are of Persian origin.

### THE PERIOD FROM ABOUT 600–970

Of the history of this period the Abyssinian Chronicles can tell us nothing. The King Lists give the names of the following kings, but not the years of their reigns.

- 1 Kḡwāṣṭantīnōs (Constantine)
- 2 Wasan Sagad (Bazagār?)
- 3 Ferē Shanāy, or Ferē Shernāy
- 4 'Adre'az (var. Adre'āzār)
- 5 'Akla Wedem (var. 'Akālā Wedem)
- 6 Germā Safar
- 7 Zergāz (var. Gergāz)
- 8 Degnā Mīkā'el (var. Dengnā Mīkā'el)
- 9 Bāḥr 'Ikelā
- 10 Gūm
- 11 'Asgwōmgūm
- 12 Letem
- 13 Talātem
- 14 'Ōdā Gōsh (var. 'Ōdā Sāsa)

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

- 15 'Ayzūr, who reigned half a day and was choked.
- 16 Dedem
- 17 Wededem
- 18 Wedem 'Asfarē, who reigned 150 years
- 19 'Armāḥ
- 20 Degnā Djān (var. Ged'ā Djān, *i.e.* Ged'ā the king)
- 21 'Anbasa Wedem
- 22 Delnā'ād, from whom the throne was taken and given to others who were not Israelites, *i.e.* the Zāgwē.

### THE REIGN OF 'ARMĀḤ

During the early years of the 7th century Muḥammad the Prophet was engaged in fierce controversy with the Ḷoraish tribe who were keepers of the Ka'bah at Makkah, and were among the bitterest enemies of himself and his new doctrines. His converts belonged to the lower classes and many of them were weak and poor and slaves, and these the Koraish seized and imprisoned and tortured. Some were tied up in the desert and left all day in the heat of the sun without water, and among those who were so treated there was only one who did not recant, *viz.* Bilāl. As Muḥammad's followers increased in number, the tortures inflicted on them became more and more severe, until at length the Prophet advised the sufferers to seek asylum in the "land of righteousness, wherein no one is wronged," *i.e.* Abyssinia. In 615 eleven men and four women fled from Makkah, and reached the port of Shu'ēba (near Jiddah), where they embarked in two ships and were carried across the sea to Abyssinia, for half a dīnār each (about five shillings). Men of the Ḷoraish pursued them, but arrived after they had sailed. This was called the "First Hijrah" or "Flight" to Abyssinia, as distinguished from the later and more extensive emigration to that country. The Nagāshī received the fugitives kindly, and they lived under his protection in peace and comfort for three months; at the end of that time hearing that the Ḷoraish were converted to Islām they returned to Makkah (615). Before they entered the city they heard that the rumour which had reached them was false, and when they came to their houses their persecution became more strenuous than before. Almost immediately afterwards a new party of Muḥammad's followers set out for Abyssinia,

## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

and other groups of men and women went there at intervals until there were 101 in all at the court of the Nagāshī. Then the Ḳoraish became alarmed and sent an embassy of two of the chiefs of Makkah to the Nagāshī, with rich gifts, to ask him to deliver up the fugitives to them. When the Nagāshī heard their request he said that he would question the fugitives himself, and on the following morning they were summoned to his presence, where they found the Christian bishops assembled. The Nagāshī called upon them to explain why they had abandoned the faith of their fathers, and Ja'far, Muḥammad's cousin, described at length to him the teaching of the Prophet. When he had finished speaking the Nagāshī said, "Verily, this revelation and that of Moses proceed from the same source," and he was satisfied that Muḥammad's views about Jesus Christ as "a servant of God and His Apostle; His Spirit and His Word placed in the womb of Mary, the immaculate Virgin," were the same as his own. He then gave back to the envoys the presents they had brought, saying, "If you were to offer me a mountain of gold I would not give up these people who have taken refuge with me."

Some of the 101 Arabs returned to Makkah later, but the greater number of them remained in Abyssinia for many years. Ja'far and several of them returned to Makkah in 629, two years after Muḥammad had written dispatches to Heraclius, Chosroes, the Muḳauḳis, Governor of Egypt, and to 'Armāḥ, king of Abyssinia, calling upon them to acknowledge him as the true Apostle of the One God. Heraclius made no answer, Chosroes tore up the dispatch in a rage, the Muḳauḳis in Egypt answered in a non-committal fashion and sent gifts to Muḥammad, and 'Armāḥ replied saying that he accepted Islām. Muḥammad sent two dispatches to 'Armāḥ at this time by the hands of 'Amr ibn Omēya, and the contents of the first of these were as follows:

"In the Name of God, the Merciful and Compassionate, Muḥammad, the Apostle of God, to the Nagāshī Ashama (Ella Ṣaḥam (?), son of Ella Gabaz), King of Abyssinia, [sends] greeting. Glory be to God, the Only One, the Holy One, the peaceful and faithful Protector. I testify that Jesus, the Son of Mary, is the Spirit and Word of God, and that He sent them down into Mary, the blessed and immaculate Virgin, and she conceived. He created

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

Jesus of His own Spirit and made Him to live by His breath, even as he did Adam. I now summon thee to worship the One God, Who is without counterpart (or partner), and Who rules the heavens and the earth. Accept my mission, follow me, and become one of my disciples, for I am the Apostle of God. I have sent Ja'far and other believers into thy country; protect them and supply their needs. Set aside the pride of thy sovereignty. I call upon thee and thy hosts to accept the worship of the supreme Being. My mission is over. I have preached, and may heaven grant that my counsels may be of benefit to those who hear. Peace shall be with the man who shall walk in the light of the True Belief."

When the Nagāshī received this dispatch, he laid it on his head and eyes as a mark of deep respect, and then he left his throne and seated himself on the ground and said the "Shahāda" or "Testimony" that there was no god but Allāh, and that Muḥammad was the Apostle of Allāh. Later he collected a series of gifts for Muḥammad and sent them to him together with a dispatch in which he said: "In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate. To Muḥammad, the Apostle of God, King 'Armāḥ [sends] greeting. Peace be unto thee, O Apostle of God. May He shelter thee under His compassion, and give thee blessings in abundance. There is no god but Allāh, Who has brought me to Islām. Thy letter I have read, O Prophet. What thou hast said about Jesus is the right belief, for He hath said nothing more than that. I testify my belief in the King of heaven and of earth. Thy advice I have pondered over deeply. Ja'far and his company have been received with the honour due to them in my country and have been entreated hospitably. I testify that thou art the Apostle of God, and I have sworn this in the presence of Ja'far, and have acknowledged Islām before him. I attach myself to the worship of the Lord of the Worlds, O Prophet. I send my son Area as my envoy to thee, but if thou dost command it I will go myself and do homage to the holiness of thy mission. I testify that thy words are true."

In the second dispatch which Muḥammad sent to the Nagāshī he asked him to send back the thirty or forty of his followers who were still living in Abyssinia, and to betroth to him Umm Ḥabibah,

## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

the daughter of Abū Sufyān, whose former husband 'Ubēd Allāh had embraced Christianity in Abyssinia and had died there. The Nagāshī assembled his court and repeated the "Shahāda," and performed the ceremony of betrothal, and then gave Umm Ḥabībah 400 dinārs (about £200) as her dowry. Then he delivered her to Ja'far, and sent him and his party back to Arabia loaded with gifts for Muḥammad. See Muir, *The Life of Moḥammad*, pp. 69, 80-91, 132, 366; Morié, *L'Éthiopie*, Paris, 1904, tom. II. p. 163 f.

When we remember the ardent and fanatical character of Abyssinian Christianity it must come as a surprise that 'Armāḥ and his bishops accepted Islām, and that the Nagāshī regretted that he could not go in person to Muhammad and testify to the holiness of his mission. As Muḥammad only put forward in his letter to the Nagāshī his views about Christ, and concealed his ambition to conquer the East and West as known to him, and as these views resembled the Abyssinian teaching about Christ, he subscribed to them and readily admitted that Muhammad was the Apostle of God. But there was another good reason for his submission to the Apostle of God, and that was undoubtedly political in character. The Nagāshī knew by report the nature of Muhammad's conquests, and that the peoples he had attacked in Arabia were obliged to accept Islām or the sword. The Nagāshī was in no position to fight, and he had no wish to see his people slain and his country drenched in blood; hence his acceptance of Islām, and his diplomatic answer and his gifts to the Prophet. He had no reason to fear that hordes of Muslims would fill his country as a result of his submission, for he would have a shrewd idea that 'Amr, the conqueror of Egypt, had reported to his master the geographical situation of Aksūm, and the difficulties that would have to be encountered in passing over the mountains that lie between it and the sea coast. The Nagāshī saved his country from an Arab invasion by his submission, and this is what his acceptance of Islām was intended by him to effect. Of all the countries of the Middle East Abyssinia alone preserved her Christianity undisturbed for several centuries after the reign of 'Armāḥ.

The astute councillors of Muḥammad were not slow to perceive the material advantages for them which followed in the train of his conquests, and they took steps, in conjunction with the merchants,

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

to obtain the control of the caravan routes from Aden and Sanā'a and to obtain a good share of the trade between Egypt and India via the Red Sea. Small parties of Arab merchants crossed over into Abyssinia, and little by little the Arabs established landing places on the west coast of the Red Sea, on the Abyssinian littoral. In due course Adulis, the wealthy port of Aksūm, was attacked by the Arabs and other seafaring people, and the town was looted and destroyed. This left Aksūm without a seaport, and from the time of the destruction of Adulis (630-640?), Abyssinia was cut off for centuries from the rest of the world. There was no outlet for the products of the country, the Aksūm market ceased to be, and the export trade of the country languished and died. Foreign merchants were no longer seen in Aksūm, Greek ceased to be spoken, money was rarely minted, and the veneer of Greek civilization wore thin and eventually disappeared. The building of churches ceased, and the study of the old literature was abandoned. As there was no central governing power in the land the local notables began to fight, and to raid each other's domains in the old time-honoured fashion, and the peoples in the south and south-east revived their old pagan cults and rites. By some means the Abyssinians found means to communicate with the Patriarchs of Alexandria, probably with the friendly help of the Copts, even after the conquest of Alexandria by 'Amr ibn al-Āsi in 638. In the Life of the Patriarch Isaac (686-688) mention is made of a war between the Abyssinians and Nubians. But Conti Rossini has shown by an extract from the work of Severus of Ashmūnēn that the Patriarch of Alexandria wrote to the king of Abyssinia and to the king of Nubia entreating them to make no disturbance, and not to let the controversy which was going on between them cause a breach of the peace (*Note Etiopiche*, Rome, 1897, No. 1). It is quite certain that at the end of the 7th century the Nagāshī was not in a position to make war on a large scale against any people, and the controversy referred to was probably some dispute between some chief of a district south of the Blue Nile, and a chief of some part of the Island of Meroë.

The Chronicles report nothing which would lead us to suppose that Abyssinia was invaded by any enemy during the 8th century, but some modern writers on the country state that about 770



## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

Ogier the Dane, moved by the stories of the immense richness of Abyssinia in gold, marched into the country, and overthrew the reigning king, and withdrew with immense spoil. But before he left he set upon the throne a Christian prince called John, the son of Radbod II, King of Frisia, who had been carried off by the Northmen from the court of Charles the Hammer. This John is said to have conquered the kings of fourteen provinces of Abyssinia, and to have forced their inhabitants to become Christians, and as he had, it is said, received orders when a young man, he was commonly called "Priest John," and so became the "Prester John" of mediæval writers. The King Lists contain no mention of any John who was the Nagāshī at this period, but this John may have had other names. The name "John" may have been a corruption of the old Abyssinian title Djān 𐩦𐩢𐩨 meaning "chief," "king," "loyalty," and the like, and if this was so Prester, or Presbyter, must have been a corruption of some native name of a king, but what that name was it is impossible to say. The only person in Abyssinian history who might perhaps be regarded as a "Priest King" was the famous ascetic Takla Hāymānōt, who, as we shall see later, arranged with the last of the Zāgwē kings to transfer the kingdom to a descendant of Delna'ad, a member of the Solomonite line, in 1255 or 1258. This arrangement may have been misunderstood by mediæval writers, and described by them as a conquest of Abyssinia, and in this case Delna'ad, a Christian prince, would naturally be the original of Prester Djān or Prester John. On the legends of Ogier the Dane see Riezler in the *Sitzungsberichte der König. Akad. d. Wissenschaft.*, vol. IV. Munich, 1892; Voretzsch, *Über die Sage von Ogier dem Dänen*, Halle, 1891; Pio, *Sagnet om Holger Danske*, Copenhagen 1870.

In the first half of the 9th century as a result of several wars among the governors in various parts of the country a famine took place, and this was followed by a plague. The Abūna John was expelled by means of a court intrigue headed by the queen, under the pretext that he was uncircumcised. After his departure the plague redoubled its violence, and smitten with the fear that this was the result of their treatment of John, the Patriarch of Alexandria was entreated to send back John; when he came back, and,

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

as a result of the queen's insistence, they were about to circumcise him, it was found that he was already circumcised.

The last two kings who reigned before the coming of the Zāgwē kings were Degnā Djān, or Ged'ā Djān, and 'Anbasa Wedem. When the former was dying he handed over to the Abūna Peter the responsibility of deciding which of his two sons, the princes 'Anbasa Wedem and Delna'ad, should succeed him. Peter nominated Delna'ad, which greatly offended 'Anbasa Wedem, who bribed an Egyptian monk called Mennas and sent by him letters to the Patriarch of Alexandria full of false accusations against the Abūna Peter. Mennas forged letters in which the Patriarch was made to nominate him the successor of Peter, and when Mennas returned Peter was expelled, and Mennas consecrated 'Anbasa Wedem king. The party who favoured Delna'ad collected troops and set out and attacked 'Anbasa Wedem, and defeated and dethroned him. Victor, an ally of Mennas, went to the Patriarch Cosmas II, and he excommunicated Mennas, who had, however, been seized and slain by Delna'ad's command. The reign of Delna'ad was short, perhaps about ten years.

The power of the kings of Aksūm of the Solomonic line had been steadily declining during the 8th and 9th centuries, and the country generally was drifting into a state of anarchy. In the first half of the 10th century, the people realized the shadowy character of their rule, and in some provinces it was regarded as a menace to the country generally. This seems to have been the view not only of the pagans and Jews, or converts to the Jewish Religion, but of Christians also, and three inscriptions discovered at Aksūm by the German Expedition make this fact clear. Two of these were written by the order of a king called the Ḥaṣānī Dān'el ሐገኒ ላገኑል the son of Dabra Fērēm ደብረ ፊደራም and begin with the words "In the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost," a sure proof that this king was a Christian. In his first inscription he describes how he attacked certain rebel tribes in the neighbourhood of Kasala (ጾ), and took an enormous spoil from them, and he claims to have conquered thirty peoples. In his second inscription he states that the people of Walkāyet ወልቃይት rebelled and went to Aksūm and laid it waste. These he attacked and carried off large numbers of cattle and other beasts. Then he

## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

marched into the country of Māya Salaṣala, which had once belonged to his ancestors, and carried off 10,000 sheep and 3000 cattle. The third inscription also relates to Dān'el (Daniel), and it seems to indicate that he came to Aksūm after his victorious campaigns to be acknowledged king in the old city of royalty. Meanwhile the rightful king, whoever he was, heard of Daniel's arrival and hastened to Aksūm, and found him in possession of the city. Daniel made him prisoner, it seems without fighting, for he says that no blood was shed. At present it is impossible to assign a date to Daniel's reign, or rather his series of conquests, which he could not have made without serious opposition had there been any central governing authority in the country. It is thought possible by Littmann and others that Daniel may have been one of the forerunners of the Zāgwē kings, and there is a good deal to be said in favour of this view; indeed he may have been the founder of the line.

### THE ZĀGWĒ KINGS

A description of the facts concerning the dynasty of Zāgwē kings has already been given (see above, p. 213 f.), and we need only refer here to the tradition generally received in Abyssinia that they were eleven in number and that their rule lasted for 343 years 3 months and 3 days. Some King Lists say that they were nine in number, and no two of the Lists agree as to the order in which they succeeded. It is generally stated that the last of these kings ceased to rule as the result of a friendly arrangement made by Takla Hāymānōt, the famous ascetic, but a text published by Conti Rossini in the *Revue Sémitique* for Oct. 1902 shows that there was another reason for the restoration of the Solomonic line of kings under Yekūnō 'Amlāk in 1270. In this the Zāgwē are nine in number, and their names are Panṭaw **አገጠው**, Panṭadem **አገጠድዎ**, Djān Seyūm, Djān Germē, 'Arbē **አርቤ**, Lālībalā, Na'akueto La'ab, Yemreḥana Krestōs and Yetbāarak. The text continues: "And Yekūnō 'Amlāk, because he was a lover of God, and because of his wisdom and counsel, went to Takla Hāymānōt and made him a confidant concerning his kingdom, so that God might cool his wrath against all the children of Israel. Then Takla Hāymānōt prayed and made supplication on his behalf to God,

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

from Whom cometh the appointment of all power, and he made peace between him and God. And then Yekūnō 'Amlāk went with the Abūna, Takla Hāymānōt, the father of lights, and the chief priests, and with his soldiers, six regiments(?). Their names were Wagdā, Mālēzāy, Denbī, Dabarāy, Mūgar, 'Endazābī, Wadj, 'Engārī, Warab, 'Enkāfē, Selālesha, 'Engāfī, Muāl, 'Awdjādjāy. The captain of these soldiers was Mālēzāy, who had made an agreement with this king that he should bestow upon him this position, for he was zealous for the Messianic Kingdom. And Yekūnō 'Amlāk fought and conquered his enemy and adversary by the prayer of the Abūna, Takla Hāymānōt, and forthwith acquired his kingdom; and he gave to Takla Hāymānōt the third part of the kingdom of Ethiopia, and he ruled fifteen years."

From this it is quite clear that the general tradition which says that the Zāgwē king was paid to retire from his kingdom is incorrect. If the version of the matter given above be correct, and the proofs brought forward by Rossini are sufficiently strong to show that it is, we must consider the event from an entirely different point of view. Yekūnō 'Amlāk was a pretendant to the throne and was regarded with favour by the clergy of Shoa, the head of whom was the Abūna, Takla Hāymānōt. But the clergy did nothing for him, except give him their sympathy, until he had placed himself entirely in the hands of Takla Hāymānōt, and settled with him the terms upon which he could obtain through him the necessary military support for placing him on the throne. Takla Hāymānōt set the necessary machinery in motion, and six districts each raised an army, and the whole force was, by special arrangement with Yekūnō 'Amlāk, to be commanded by Mālēzāy, a fervent Christian and a zealous supporter of the pretendant. Yekūnō 'Amlāk's armies joined battle with those of the Zāgwē king, and the nominee of the priesthoods became king of Ethiopia. But Takla Hāymānōt decided that the support of the Church was worth one-third of the kingdom of Ethiopia, and at this price Yekūnō 'Amlāk acquired the throne. That the last Zāgwē king was outfought and vanquished in the battlefield and driven from his kingdom as the result is easily understood; the idea that he allowed himself to be bought out, and abandoned his throne without striking a blow, is incredible, now we have before us what seem to be the true facts

## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

of the case. The whole question of the Zāgwē kings, their origin, their number, their succession, and the part played by Takla Hāymānōt in connection with the accession of Yekūnō 'Amlāk, is discussed at great length by Rossini in his *Appunti ed Osservazioni sui Re Zāguē e Takla Hāymānōt*, Rome, 1895; but even this erudite work does not clear away all the difficulties connected with it.

Most of the lists of the Zāgwē kings state that the first two of them were Takla Hāymānōt and Ṭoṭodem, who reigned 3 and 40 years respectively, *i.e.* from about 992–1030. Of the next four kings, Djān Sheyūm, Germā Sheyūm, Yemrehna Krestōs and Ƙedūs Hārbē, each of whom is said to have reigned 40 years, nothing is known. Some writers say that about this time (11th century) the wicked and shameful woman, called in Amḥarā 'Esātō, and in Tegray Giudīt, reigned, and that she laid waste the country and destroyed the churches for 40 years, ነግሠት፡እኪት፡ብአሲት፡መግዚት፡ትውልድ፡ዕለት፡ዘስግእሳት፡በአምሐራ፡ጉዲት፡በትግራ፡አግሰነት፡ወእመዝበረት፡አብያት፡ክርስቲያናት፡እስከ፡፱ ዓመት። A terrible famine, which lasted for seven years (1066–1072), broke out in Egypt, and it is said that the Khalīfah Mustansir-b-İllāh, thinking that the Abyssinians had turned the Nile out of its course, sent an embassy loaded with rich gifts to the king of Abyssinia, and asked him to let the Nile return to its old bed. The seventh Zāgwē king, and the most famous of them all, was Lālībalā, who has for centuries been revered as one of the greatest of Christian Saints.

### THE REIGN OF LĀLIBALĀ, WHOSE THRONE NAME WAS GABRA MASKAL (II)

The chief authority for the life and acts of Lālībalā is the Brit. Mus. MS. Orient. No. 719. This is a thick volume, containing 163 folios, which was written by one 'Abbā 'Amḥā for the monastery of Golgotha before the reign of Zar'a Yā'qōb, who ascended the throne A.D. 1434. Another MS. of similar contents is Orient. No. 718, which was written in the 19th century. (Wright, *Catalogue*, CCXCIV and CCXCV. p. 193.) The importance of the former manuscript is due to its age, for it must contain the traditions of Lālībalā that were current in Abyssinia in the 14th century. A portion of the Ethiopic text has been edited with a French translation by Perruchon in his *Vie de Lalibala*, Paris, 1892.

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

Lālībalā was the son of Djān Sheyūm, a rich man who was a native of Rōḥa **ሮሐ**, and he was born in that town. When his mother had brought him forth, a dense cloud of bees surrounded him, and when she saw this the spirit of prophecy came upon her, and she cried out: "The bees know that this child is a king," and she called him Lālībalā, which means "The bee recognizes his sovereignty." She thought also that the bees represented the soldiers of the army that would serve her son, though tradition says that the bees were angels who had taken the form of bees. As the boy grew up, he became a handsome man; he was without spot or blemish or physical defect of any kind. His cheeks were red like pomegranates, his eyes were like the morning star, his hands were well-shaped, his nose was straight, his mouth was admirable, his speech was eloquent and his voice soft and agreeable. His mental and spiritual qualities matched his physical form, for he was full of wisdom and understanding, pure in spirit, and he was shrewd and cautious in judgment. The reigning king was Ḥarbāy **ከርባይ**, a brother of Lālībalā, and as soon as he heard of the prophecy about his younger brother he became jealous, and fearing for the safety of his throne, began to persecute him. His courtiers administered a dose of poison to Lālībalā, but though it caused him a temporary illness, he managed to throw off its ill effects, and so the plot to remove him by poison failed. Then a sister of his sent him a bowl of poisoned beer one day when he was thirsty, and as there was a deacon with him he invited him to drink first from the bowl: the deacon did so, and at once his whole body was seized with shiverings, and he became violently sick, and fell on the ground and died straightway. A dog that had licked up a few drops that fell from the bowl died immediately. Then, realizing that the poison was intended for him, and grieving sorely at the death of his friend the deacon and his dog, he took up the bowl and drank all that was in it, saying, "Let me die even as they died, for it is through me that they are dead." But the poisoned beer did not kill him; on the contrary it was a blessing in disguise. For some time past he had been suffering from a "great worm" in his body, which often made him ill, but the worm drank the poison and was forthwith expelled from his body, and the saint henceforth enjoyed good health.

## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

Soon after this incident angels came to Lālībalā and transported him into the first, second and third heavens, and God gave him the command to build ten monolithic churches, and gave him detailed instructions as to their construction and colours. And God told him to have no anxiety as to his sovereignty, for He had caused him to be anointed with holy oil in order that he might build the ten churches. Lālībalā's spirit was absent from his body for three days, and in that period he had been shown the mysteries of the seven heavens, and the Majesty of God sitting above the Cherubim. When his soul returned to its body he found that it had been prepared for burial, for his friends believed that he was dead; he re-entered his body, and sat up, and all who saw him were astonished. Immediately after this his family and their friends renewed their persecution of him, and this became so strong that he retired to the desert, where he lived with the wild animals which he hunted and the birds which he snared for food. Whilst Lālībalā was living in the desert, his guardian angel came to him, and announced to him that at that hour on the following day a Christian maiden, who had been chosen by God, would come there to him, and that she was to be his wife. Lālībalā refused to receive the maiden on the ground that he did not want to marry any one, but the angel assured him that it was his duty to marry and beget offspring. Lālībalā persisted in his refusal of the maiden, and only agreed to marry her after a long discussion with the angel, who showed him that God's Will must be done. On the following day the maiden appeared, and she brought him food and visited him several times, and at length Lālībalā told her to inform her father about him; she did so, and her father and mother gave her to him in marriage. The maiden's name was Maṣkal Kebra. Soon after this evil men, wishing to harm Lālībalā, made false accusations against him to the king, to the effect that he had married a woman who was betrothed to another man. He was summoned before the king his brother, who having heard his defence and disbelieving it, ordered him to be flogged with a whip. When the men began to flog him the king went into the church and received the Sacrament, and men took it in turns to flog Lālībalā the whole time the king was in the church. But an angel covered him with his wings, and Lālībalā suffered in no way. On his return to his wife, he took her

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

and they both departed to the desert, where they were miraculously fed by God; and when the king sent his servants to bring them back, they could not find the saint and his wife, for they had betaken themselves to caves in the mountains to which they were led by the angel Gabriel. When they reached the eastern frontier of Ethiopia, Gabriel informed Maṣḳal Kebra that it was God's Will that her husband should go to Jerusalem and visit the Holy Places, and that He had instructed the Archangel Michael to take charge of her until his return.

When Lālībalā had seen all the mysteries of Jerusalem, Gabriel set him on his wings and carried him back to Ethiopia, where he found his wife waiting for him under the protection of Michael. Then the two Archangels and the two mortals set out together for the town of Rōḥa, and King Ḥarbē, acting on the instructions of our Lord, Who had appeared to him, went out on foot to meet Lālībalā, and did homage to him and begged forgiveness for his past cruelty to him. Then the two brothers rode back to the palace on the same mule, and Ḥarbē abdicated the throne and crowned Lālībalā king. But the new king did not alter his manner of life, for he fasted and prayed incessantly, and our Lord bestowed upon him the gift of working miracles. Those who treated these miracles with contempt were speedily punished by God, and Lālībalā's fame waxed great in the land.

The time had now arrived for Lālībalā to fulfil God's command to him to build the ten monolithic churches, and he devoted himself to this work with great zeal. He collected artificers, carpenters, masons and others, had tools forged, and arranged a scale of wages for the workers, and purchased from the people the ground which he required. Angels joined the workmen and toiled with them by day, and in the night they did double the amount of work which the men had done during the day. For descriptions of the churches see above, p. 164 f. When the churches were finished Lālībalā felt that his work in this world was done, and he had no wish to continue to reign himself, and he did not want his son to succeed him. For he thought the time had come when the sovereignty should be restored to the Solomonic line. He distributed his goods among the poor, leaving himself almost without shoes to his feet. He endowed his churches handsomely, and furnished them with



## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

crosses and hangings and paintings. Shortly afterwards he fell sick, and after a few days' illness he died on the 22nd day of the month Hazirān (June) in the year 1220 (?), aged 70 years. He was buried in the church of Golgotha, but later he was translated to another of his churches (see above, p. 171); the portrait of him which has been so much praised is a comparatively modern work.

### NA'AKUETŌ LA'AB ነአኩዊቶ ለአብ፡

Lālibalā was succeeded by Na'akueto La'ab, a Christian prince of Lāstā (whose name means "Let us give thanks to the Father"), who was the son of Ḥarbē, a brother of Lālibalā, and a Galla princess, who renounced her pagan cult to marry a Christian. According to some, Na'akueto La'ab was sent into Yaman in some official capacity, and whilst there he fell under the influence of the Arabs, and learned their habits and ways, and it is said that he visited the Khalīfah in Cairo secretly; the Arabs regarded this visit as tantamount to a submission to their chief and a sign that he had become a Muslim. On his return to Yaman he was recalled by the king to Abyssinia, and he left Arabia with many regrets. In Abyssinia he surrounded himself with Gallas, and began to live in much the same way as did the wild and lawless Arabs of Yaman. For some time past he had been in love with Lālibalā's beautiful daughter Judith, and he longed to marry her and reign over Lāstā with her. But Judith had no love for him, and her father did not urge on her the claim of his nephew. When Lālibalā died, Na'akueto La'ab felt that his opportunity had come, and he filled the town with his Galla followers, and supported by them proclaimed himself king (Negūs) of Abyssinia, and made plans for taking possession of Judith. On hearing of these Judith fled to the north with her faithful women, but when she found that it was impossible to continue to escape from the king's envoys she and her women committed suicide. When the news of this happening was brought to the king, he was stricken with remorse, and abandoned his life of pleasure, and fasted and prayed incessantly and repented of his past life. He conversed frequently with the Abūna, Takla Hāymānōt, who had been his teacher and had recently founded the monastery of Dabra Libānōs, and little by little the influence of

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

that famous ascetic over him increased until at length he directed the king's policy. The Abūna was anxious to see the Solomonic line of kings restored, and having pointed out to the king that the Zāgwē kings were usurpers, and that he had no son to follow him on the throne, Na'akueto La'ab agreed to abdicate in favour of Yekūnō 'Amlāk of Shoa. The details of the arrangement which the Abūna was able to make with the Zāgwē king and the prince of Shoa have already been described (see above, p. 216 f.). Na'akueto La'ab died about 1270, aged 70 years, having reigned 38, or 40, or 48 years.

In spite of the abdication of Na'akueto La'ab, three Zāgwē kings reigned in a shadowy fashion. The first of these was Yetbārak ዩጥባር, a son of Lālībalā, who was a priest and reigned 22, or 40 years, and died about 1290 (?). The second king was Mayrārī ጠዩራሪ, who reigned 15 or 18 years, and died about 1308 (?). The third king was Ḥarbāy ሐርባይ, who reigned about 20 or 23 years, and died about 1330 (?). He was the last Zāgwē king who claimed to be the Nagāshī or Negūs of Abyssinia, but his descendants continued to govern Lāstā for several centuries. There was very little in Abyssinia to show for the three and a half centuries of the rule of the Zāgwē kings, for they conducted no wars of importance, they made no conquests, and they added no territory to the kingdom. Their principal monuments are the rock-hewn churches which were made by Lālībalā. But during their reigns the Arabs consolidated their rule in the countries they had conquered, and Islām had made its way as far south as the Island of Meroë, and even beyond. They were masters of the trade between Egypt and Somaliland and India via the Red Sea, and they possessed many seaports on the western coast of the Red Sea. In fact Abyssinia was shut in on both the east and west sides by the Arabs, and was even at that time, as King Menyelek II described her seven centuries later, an island of Christianity in a sea of paganism and Muḥammadanism. And that the Arabs were preparing to conquer Abyssinia was clear to every nation except the Abyssinians. With the end of the rule of the Zāgwē kings we come to a period of real history which, beginning in 1268, continues to the present time; all the kings who reigned during this period are known, and accurate dates can be assigned to them.

# THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

## THE "RESTORATION" OF THE SOLOMONIC LINE OF KINGS

I adopt here the title "Solomonic" for the series of kings which begins with Yekūnō 'Amlāk, out of respect for Abyssinian tradition, and because it has been used for more than two centuries by Europeans who have written histories of Abyssinia. But it must not be forgotten that one of our greatest authorities, Conti Rossini, believes that this king was more likely to have been the FOUNDER than the restorer of that line.

### YEKŪNŌ 'AMLĀK ኧኩኖ ሳሙኤል

These words are not a name, but a short sentence, meaning "There shall be to him sovereignty," and they were probably spoken to him or of him by some holy man, perhaps Takla Hāymānōt, who was inspired by the spirit of prophecy. His baptismal name was, according to Wright (*Catalogue*, p. vi), TASFĀ ĪVĀSŪS ተስፋ፡ አ.ያሱስ፡, but others say it was JOHN. He reigned 15 years, 1268-1283 or 1270-1285. He did not make the ancient city of Aksūm his capital, but established himself as king in his native town of Tegulat. On his accession to the throne he ratified the agreement which he had made, when prince of Shoa, with Takla Hāymānōt, and transferred to him one-third of his kingdom for the maintenance of the Church of Abyssinia. He hated the Arabs, and marshalled all his forces and attacked them furiously whenever possible, but he suffered great losses in these wars, and the Muslims laid waste many parts of his country. His reign was troubled greatly by the intrigues of Theodosius II, Patriarch of Alexandria, but the danger of the Arabs united the peoples of his country, and the ecclesiastic was not able to do any permanent harm. He corresponded with the Khalifah Beybars I and with the Emperor Michael VIII Palaiologos (1261-1282), to whom he sent several giraffes as a gift. In the last year but one of his reign the Abūna, his friend and counsellor from his youth up, retired from active life, or died, and the whole nation mourned the loss of an honest and devoted servant of his native land, for he was an Abyssinian. Some say that he died in the 14th year of the reign of Wedem 'Ar'ād.

The following details of the life of this great ascetic are derived from the "Life and Miracles of Takla Hāymānōt," by Gabra

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

Maskal, as contained in Brit. Mus. MS. Orient. No. 723; the original Ethiopic texts, together with an English translation and coloured facsimiles of the plates, were edited by Budge, *The Life of Takla Hāymānōt in the Version of Dabra Libānōs*, and the Miracles, etc., two vols., London, 1906. Takla Hāymānōt was believed to be a descendant of Zadok, the priest who, with Nathan the prophet, appointed Solomon king. Takla Hāymānōt was the son of Ṣagā Za'ab by his wife 'Egzī'e Ḥārayā. Before the birth of the child the town in which his father lived, Zōrarē, was besieged by Matalōmē, governor of Dāmōt and Shawā (Shoa), a pagan and a cruel and rapacious man. Ṣagā Za'ab fled from the city, but his wife was caught by Matalōmē's soldiers, who took her to their lord, who intended to marry her. But at the moment when Matalōmē was taking 'Egzī'e Ḥārayā to his bed, he saw flashes of lightning and heard peals of thunder, and suddenly Michael the archangel appeared before him. In a moment Michael smote the king with madness, and slew the guards, and carried off 'Egzī'e Ḥārayā, and restored her to her husband. In due course the son which Michael had promised her arrived, and three days after his birth the Holy Spirit descended upon him; the name given to him at his baptism was Feshḥa Ṣeyōn. He began to work miracles when he was fifteen months old, and turned water into wine, etc. At the age of seven he knew the Psalter and the Books of the Old and New Testament by heart, and at the end of his fifteenth year Bishop Gērlōs made him a deacon. Soon after, the Lord changed his name to Takla Hāymānōt, and the bishop made him high priest of Shoa, and gave him power to cast out devils. The account of the life which he led in the desert, and the miracles which he wrought, etc., fills a very large volume, and for detailed information about them the reader may consult the book mentioned above. It is sufficient to say here that he performed every miracle described in the Old and New Testaments. The saint died on the 17th day of the month of 'Ab (August 7 of the Romans), and was buried in his monastery. His age was about 90 years, and the year of his death is given as 1282, 1284 and 1311. Takla Hāymānōt was the last native who was made Abūna.

## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

### YĀGBE'Ā ṢEYŌN ያገብኝ፡ጸዮን፡

These words are not a name, but a sentence, meaning "He (*i.e.* God) shall bring back Zion," and the king's baptismal name was Salōmōn ሰሎሞን, or Solomon. He was a son of Yekūnō 'Amlāk and reigned nine years, 1285–1294. He maintained communication with the monks of the Abyssinian monastery in Jerusalem, and obtained from Al-'Ādil Sēf ad-Dīn (1196–1218) permission to send supplies to them (Quatremère, *Mémoires sur l'Égypte*, tom. II. p. 267). Yāgbe'ā Ṣeyōn had five sons, whose names were:

Sēnfa 'Ar'ēd (IV) ደንፈ፡አርዲድ፡

Hezba 'Asgad ሕንበ፡አስገድ፡

Kedma 'Asgad ቅድመ፡አስገድ፡

Djīn 'Asgad ገን፡አስገድ፡

Sab'a 'Asgad (II) ሰብአ፡አስገድ፡

Their father being unwilling to break up his kingdom into five parts, and feeling unable to nominate any one of his sons as his successor, decreed that they should reign each for one year at a time, and that during that year he should be regarded as the sole king of Abyssinia. The first four of these princes reigned as their father wished, but the fifth, Sab'a 'Asgad (II), was too impatient to wait till his turn to rule came, and before the year of rule of Djīn 'Asgad was ended he and his friends conspired to seize the reigning king and his brethren, and determined to imprison them on Amba Geshēnā, a very high and precipitous mountain in the kingdom of 'Amḥarā. But Djīn 'Asgad was informed of this conspiracy, and he had his treacherous brother arrested, and shut up on the mountain of Geshēnā. With him he sent his three other brothers and his own sons. The five brothers reigned five years, 1294–1299, during which period the Arabs strengthened their hold upon the Abyssinian sea-coast.

### WEDEM 'AR'ĀD ወድሞ፡አርዳድ፡

Wedem 'Ar'ād was a younger son of Yekūnō 'Amlāk, and he reigned 15 years, 1299–1314; the Chronicle published by Basset (p. 99) says that Takla Hāymānōt died in the 14th year of his reign, [aged 91 years]. His body was translated from Dabra Lībānōs, which he had founded, to the church at Gondar which is

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

dedicated to him. Nothing is known of the acts of Wedem 'Ar'ād. He seems to have been a man of peace, and it is certain that he made no preparations for resisting the attacks of the Arabs upon his kingdom, which were imminent. It is said that he sent an envoy to Pope Clement V at Avignon, but whether he sought spiritual or material help is not known. When he came to the throne he found that the whole of the Abyssinian sea-coast, from the Gulf of Tajūrah to Somaliland, was in the possession of a series of petty kings of mixed descent, Arab and Negro: some of them were followers of Islām, and some of them were pagans, whose cults were derived from the Blacks of the Equatorial Sūdān. The Zāgwē kings seem to have managed to extract tribute from them from time to time, but when the Adel people of Tajūrah and their allies saw the weakness and incapacity to rule of the new group of Solomonic kings, they realized that the time for proclaiming themselves independent had nearly arrived. The seafaring Muslims with whom they traded urged them to attack the Abyssinians on the plateau and to take possession of the ivory, skins of elephants, etc., gum, spice and gold, which they believed existed there in untold quantities. Early in the first half of the 14th century the Arabs began the series of wars against the Abyssinians which lasted for about three hundred years, and wellnigh destroyed the kingdom of Abyssinia.

### 'ĀMDA ŞEYŌN I. GABRA MASKAL (II OR III ?)

ገግግ ጸገግ-ገገገ ጸገገ ጸገገ

'Āmda Şeyōn I was the son of Wedem 'Ar'ād, and the grandson of Yekūnō 'Amlāk, and reigned 30 years, 1312-1342 or 1314-1344; his regnal name was Gabra Maskal, *i.e.* "Servant of the Cross," but he is always spoken of as 'Āmda Şeyōn, *i.e.* "Pillar of Zion." During the first half of his reign he gave himself up to pleasure and to quarrelling with the clergy, and in the second half he proved himself to be a fine fighter and a good soldier. He seems to have been by nature a kind and generous man, but in his sudden outbursts of anger he perpetrated many cruelties. At the beginning of his reign he committed fornication with one of his father's concubines, and with both of his sisters. These disgraceful acts brought upon him the wrath of Abbā Honorius of Şegādjā, who threatened to



## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

is satisfactory. The first king to attack Abyssinia at this time was Şabr ad-Dīn of 'Īfāt, a country to the east of Shoa. He raided the country round about, killed many and captured prisoners, and then compelled the people to embrace Islām. Then, as if he were the king of Abyssinia, he proceeded to appoint governors of towns and provinces, even of places which he had not seen. His hatred of the Christians was very great, and he burnt the churches wherever he went: he boasted that he would convert or slay Gabra Maşkal, and that he would make his Queen Djān Mangashā crush grain to make his bread. When Gabra Maskal heard of his boasts he marched into Ḥadya, fought a fierce fight there and massacred many. He captured the king and carried him and all his people to his capital Tagulat. Then he collected a large army, and in five days a regiment called the "Wolves" reached the palace of Şabr ad-Dīn which they seized and looted, but he himself managed to escape. When the rest of the army arrived they destroyed the town, and then looted his camp and captured vast quantities of spoil.

Then 'Āmda Şeyōn collected the troops called Dāmōt, Sakalt, Gondar, Ḥadya, and sent them under an officer called Tsagā Krestōs to carry war into Bēgamder, the people of which had formerly been Christians. He himself set out to attack a pagan called Nedḥan, and came to Dawārō, an eastern province of Ethiopia. Ḥayedarā, the governor, had made an alliance with Şabr ad-Dīn, but pretended to be a friend of 'Āmda Şeyōn. At Gālā, or Gāzā, the king halted his troops and celebrated the Easter Festival. Then, leaving his wife Mangashā መንግሥት behind him, he set out and raided the district of Samāryā, and killed many people and seized their wives and cattle. The following day he and twenty-six young warriors set out secretly and killed many people, but his real object was to train his followers to endure the hardships of a soldier's life when on the march through hostile country. The soldiers he had left behind became alarmed for his safety and set out in search of him, and they met him on his way back to his camp. When Şabr ad-Dīn heard of the total defeat of his army, he wrote a letter to Queen Mangashā and said he would come and submit to 'Āmda Şeyōn, and in due course he came. The soldiers wished to kill him, saying that he had burnt churches and killed Christians, and warned the king that he had only come there because he trusted to the protec-



## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

tion of a talisman which he wore. The king had him stripped, and there, sure enough, were found talismans on his arms and round his waist; his arms were then bound in fetters, but the king spared his life. Ḥayedarā, Sabr ad-Dīn's ally, was next captured and bound in fetters, and Jamāl ad-Dīn was made governor of the Muslims in the place of his brother Ṣabr ad-Dīn.

The powerful peoples of 'Adal አደል and Mōrā ሞራ and their allies then rebelled against 'Āmda Ṣeyōn, and set out to raid the eastern and southern countries of his kingdom. In 'Īfāt ኢፋት they surprised an Abyssinian company asleep at midnight and fell upon them and massacred them all. Emboldened by their success, the Arabs, or Moors (as Bruce always calls them), attacked a second company, and later on a third company, of Abyssinians, and in each case were victorious, and they succeeded in retreating in safety with much spoil. When the king came up with his main army his soldiers set out in pursuit of the Arabs, and when they came up with them a great battle took place, and the Arabs were massacred in large numbers, and the Abyssinians carried off their tents and other spoil. A little later the king's soldiers captured a body of spies, who were promptly slain. The following day the captains and officers of 'Āmda Ṣeyōn's army came to him, and pointing out to him that the rainy season was nigh, they asked to be allowed to return home. The king told them that he would never go home whilst the Muslims continued to make war upon him, and commanded them not to utter such words to him again.

Leaving Gālā, 'Āmda Ṣeyōn made a march of four days to rejoin his armies, and then, having killed many of his enemies, he pitched his camp at a place still further in the country of the enemy. Whilst here the seven peoples of 'Adal, and Mōrā, and Ṭīkō ጠቆ and Pāgūmā ቅጉማ and Labakalā ለበካ and Wārgār ሞርጋር and Gabalā ገበካ banded themselves together and determined to kill the king and destroy his army. Thrice they attacked the Abyssinians at midnight, or rather during the very dark hour which precedes the dawn, but 'Āmda Ṣeyōn rushed out of his tent with drawn sword and put the enemy to flight. On the third occasion a man disguised as one of his own soldiers came up behind him and tried to cut him down from his horse, and succeeded in hacking through his belt and tunic, but the king turned round

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

and speared him, and remained unwounded. A battle followed, and at the moment when the Christians were being overborne, the king rode into the Arabs and speared their leader, and the rest took to flight, leaving the ground strewn with their dead. The Abyssinians pursued them, and came up with them on the bank of a river, which they were trying to cross, and massacred them all; they brought back swords, bows, lances and other equipment in great numbers.

After making a long address to his army, 'Āmda Şeyōn set out on the march, crossed the River Yās ያሳ and encamped at Mōrā, where a certain Christian woman came to him and revealed to him the plans of the Arabs in respect of him. The region was one which was frequently visited by the terrible *habñb* or wind storm, and the Arabs determined to wait for one of these to wreck the Abyssinian camp and then to fall upon the soldiers when confusion was at its highest. In due course a wind storm came and blew down the king's tent, and scattered everything in the camp far and wide. The soldiers became panic stricken, and cried out for their king, who appeared, and blew a blast on his war trumpet, and then they rallied and under his leadership attacked and defeated the enemy. 'Āmda Şeyōn had now reached a part of the country of 'Adal which had never before been visited by a king of Abyssinia, and every man in it was hostile to him. By day and by night the fighting went on, and for nearly two months (April 26-June 25) the king had never taken off his belt. At Das ደሳ, near the water called Fūr ቶር, the priests could not tell which part of it was the east and which the west. Though it was the middle of winter the heat was so great that it burnt up man and beast, there was no grass, and only stinking water from wells was to be had, and even this had to be carefully rationed. Our annalist says that the natives walk on their hands with their feet in the air, and move as quickly in this way as if they were on their feet.

The kings and governors and chiefs from one end of the country of the sea-coast to the other now became thoroughly alarmed at the victories which 'Āmda Şeyōn was gaining over the Arabs and their allies, and they took counsel with a certain chief Seleḥ ስለሕ whose office was that of Ḳāzī ቅዝ. He was the son of a nobleman of Makkah, and was universally honoured for his high character

## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

and piety; his word was as the word of God to the Muslims, and his spiritual power was as that of the Pope. With the approval and consent of this man the kings and governors made ready to throw off all allegiance to the king of Abyssinia, and banded themselves together to make war upon him. They were in number 2722 ብድረአዳሪ, though Bruce says 2712, and the number of their soldiers (?), not including those of Zalān and Gabal, was 12,048.

At this juncture Jamāl ad-Dīn, whom 'Āmda Şeyōn had made governor of the country in place of his brother Şabr ad-Dīn, revolted, and he sent a message to the king of 'Adal to this effect. "The king of Abyssinia is shut up in a mountain defile from which he cannot get out. Now you must do one of two things; either take gifts to him or do not. If you take gifts to him, before you do so sell your wife and children and all that you possess, for if you give him gifts you will make yourself and your posterity his servants for ever. If you wish to act wisely, send him no gifts, and gather together all your men who are able to fight with sword, bow, shield, javelin, lance and club, and I will join you with my cavalry and infantry and we will fall upon the king and his army and kill them with one blow." The British Muscum MS. Orient. 821 gives a list of the places over which the kings, governors and chiefs ruled, and it is printed in full in Ferruchon's edition of the text, p. 48 ff.; the positions of very few of the places can be identified now, for even in Bruce's time the greater number of the towns and villages had ceased to exist. The king of 'Adal and all the other kings collected their soldiers, and four months had elapsed before they had joined the army of Jamāl ad-Dīn. When the host was ready for war this arrogant Arab began to boast what he would do to the Christians, and with the view of securing all the spoil of the Christians for himself he decided not to wait for the troops from 'Īfāt, because the loot would not be sufficient for their king and himself.

Now at that moment it happened that 'Āmda Şeyōn was alone, and he had none of his picked troops with him. His regiments of "Eyes of needles" ቀስተ፡ገሀብ፡ and "Wolves" ተተላ፡ and the Korani horsemen, and the Bāryā, and the Ḥarab Gōndā, and many other great regiments were absent on duty elsewhere. When they fought they struck like eagles, and leaped like rams, their feet were like stone rollers and the noise of their feet was like that of the sea.

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

And 'Āmda Seyōn lay sick in his tent, and for seven days and seven nights he had eaten and drunk nothing. He had sent out one of his men called Zana Yamānu with the dogs into the desert to hunt game for him, and whilst this man was hunting he came across the Arab army; he returned forthwith to the king and told him what he had seen, adding, "We have come back to die with you." The king sent out horsemen to reconnoitre, and they reported that the enemy were in numbers like a cloud of grasshoppers which had covered the earth. On hearing this he struggled up from his bed and tried to go outside the tent, but when he began to put on his war belt, his legs doubled up under him and he collapsed on his bed. His servants lifted him up and put on his belt, and he managed to go outside the tent, but he swayed from side to side through weakness. His two queens followed him and begged him to give up the idea of fighting, but he replied, "Am I to die like a woman? Certainly not. I know how to die like a soldier." Then he turned and ordered the queens to return to their tents. The elder of them, Djān Mangashā, prayed with tears to God to strengthen her lord, the priests prayed, and the king prayed, committing himself into the hands of God.

Meanwhile the Arab armies were advancing, every man armed, and in number they were as the stars of heaven and the sand of the sea-shore, and the rain clouds of the sky; as they marched the earth shook, and the wild beasts were so terrified that they ran before them and took refuge in the camp of 'Āmda Şeyōn. And the queen sent to 'Āmda Şeyōn a quantity of Jordan water and some dust from Golgotha. The king called the priest Takla Şeyōn and told him to baptize him with the water, as he stood there in full armour; and as the water fell upon him his weakness departed and the strength of God came upon him. And the king himself sprinkled his horses and his men with the water. The Arab army came on and in its van were a number of women who shrieked out curses. 'Āmda Şeyōn sprinkled some of the water about to annul the effects of the curses, and sent on a detachment of horsemen to open the battle; these turned and fled, and entreated him to fight in his camp. When he refused, his friends kissed him and fled, leaving him alone to meet death as best he might. As they departed he hurled reproaches after them, and then being filled

## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

with rage, he sprang up like a tiger and leaped upon his horse Ḥarab 'Asfarē ሐረብ ላሳፍራ and ordered his chief officer of cavalry, called Zanasfarē ዘንክሰፊሬ, to ride into the enemy's ranks on the right. Zanasfarē, followed by five horsemen among whom was the king's son Sāf-Sagad, did as he was bid. The king charged the enemy on the left, looking neither before him nor behind him, and at once became the target for arrows, javelins and spears, and the object of a shower of blows. Nothing stopped him, and when the enemy saw him spearing two men at a time they broke and fled. The soldiers who had forsaken him returned and joined Zanasfarē and his men, and drove the fleeing enemy into a deep ditch which God seemed to have prepared for them. Then the king dismounted and attacked the enemy with his sword and smote them down until his strength failed. The enemy were men of huge stature and wore their hair hanging down to their waists like women, and though they tied themselves to each other by means of their clothes so that no man might flee, they were conquered by the king. 'Āmda Ṣeyōn remounted his horse and set out with his soldiers to cut down those who were fleeing, and meanwhile the Abyssinian women came out and stripped the dead and carried their weapons back to their camp. The battle raged for six hours, until sunset, by which time the Muslims were either scattered or slain, and the king's arm was attached so tightly to his lance by the blood of the slain that force had to be used to detach it. The dead lay round about in heaps, and the wounded could not be counted.

When the battle was over 'Āmda Seyōn returned to his camp, and entering his chapel gave thanks to God for the victory He had given him. On the following day he visited the battle-field and found there the body of Seleḥ, whom the Muslims regarded as a god. His neck was covered with tattooings or magical symbols. 'Āmda Ṣeyōn then assembled his troops and put to them the question, "Ought we to send home our wives and servants, or ought we to keep them here whilst we march on and continue the war?" The soldiers gave no direct answer to this question, and the priests said one thing and the officers another, but at length the army in general made it clear to the king that they wished to return to their country. The king replied that it



## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

day and the cold by night; a whole day was passed in returning to the camp. On arriving there the king gave thanks to Christ for his victory.

The following day he set out for Sasōgi ሰሶጊ፣ where he celebrated the festival of John the Baptist. He then ordered his troops to destroy the mosques of the Arabs, and to burn their towns and to lay waste the country; all these things were done with great thoroughness. 'Āmda Şeyōn next set out on the march, crossed the River Zar'at ዠርሐት፣ and arrived in the country of 'Arātē አራቲ፣ which was inhabited by fierce savages. These people filed their teeth sharp, and were in the habit of biting off the ears and phalli of the dead which they dragged from their graves; and they bit off the ears and the members of every one they captured in the fields. They seized several of the Abyssinians and treated them in this way. 'Āmda Şeyōn took vengeance upon them, and massacred many of them. He then marched on to Ḥadjayā ሐገያ፣ where he camped for eight days and celebrated the festival of the Cross (Sept. 25). Whilst there he succeeded by a stratagem in killing a great many of these savages, and he gained much spoil. It seems that they were in the habit of carrying the ears and phalli of the dead in their quivers. After a march of six days he arrived at Beḫuelzār ቡጥራዘር፣ where he camped. He sent for the Muslim governor and threatened to lay waste the country if he did not deliver to him the people who had been forced to deny Christ and become Muslims. When these were brought before him it was found that some had been priests, some deacons, and others soldiers in the king's army. When they made no answer to the king's up-braidings, the king became wroth and had each of them beaten with thirty stripes of a cord whip, and branded with a slave mark on the breast and shoulders; and each had an iron collar put on his neck and chains on his hands. Then, knowing that the Arab governor was a rebel at heart, he put iron fetters on his hands, laid waste his country, and deposed him and set his brother Naş ad-Dīn in his place. He then marched to Wāz ዋዝ፣ and ordered his soldiers to destroy the town of Gēt ጌት፣; they did so and killed a large number of the Arabs of Ḥarlā ሐርላ፣ who had tried to raid the king's camp.

'Āmda Şeyōn then set out on a punitive expedition to Delhōyā

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

**ደላሆኛ**, and arrived there after a march of five days. The people here had seized one of 'Āmda Ṣeyōn's envoys, and burned him alive, and had massacred all those who were with him. In return the Christians massacred all the men, laid waste the country, and carried off all the women and children and cattle. Another three days' march brought him to Dagwu **ደገላ** where he camped, and sent out his soldiers against the people of Wargeḥ **ወርግሕ**, a lawless pastoral folk who knew no god and feared no man, and the usual massacre and looting took place. A punitive expedition to Dawārō followed. 'Āmda Ṣeyōn had sent messengers to his queen carrying with them rich apparel destined for royal use, gold and other precious objects. As they passed through Dawārō the natives fell upon them suddenly and looted the royal caravan and slew all its members. As a punishment the king's soldiers laid waste the country, destroyed the food stuffs, and carried off the women and cattle. Here the king celebrated the festival of Christmas, and three days later he kept the feast of Epiphany at Bahlā **በህላ**. Whilst in this neighbourhood he sent for Joseph, the governor of Sārkā **ሳርካ**, a town of Gojam, in the south of Abyssinia, now occupied by the Gallas. Joseph had taken an active part in the rebellion of Dawārō, and when he was brought into the presence of the king 'Āmda Ṣeyōn had him burnt alive. This is the last act chronicled in the work on the Wars of 'Āmda Ṣeyōn. In places the narrative resembles that of 'Ēzānā, when he recounts his victories on his stelae, and the method of warfare followed by 'Āmda Ṣeyōn in the 14th century of our Era is much the same as that of the Pharaohs of the XIIth and succeeding Dynasties in Egypt, and the Nubian kings of Napata and Meroë. It is interesting to note one incident in the king's campaigns, viz. that in which he was left alone by his soldiers to face the enemy, may be compared with a similar incident at the Battle of Kadesh, when Rameses II found himself alone and surrounded by the Hittites. See *Rec. de Travaux*, tom. VIII. pp. 126-131.

NEWĀYA KRESTÖS SAYFA 'AR'ED **ንዋየክርስቶስ ሰይፈአርዕድ**

· Newāya Krestōs was the eldest son of 'Āmda Ṣeyōn, and he reigned 28 years, 1344-1372; his name means "Vessel of Christ." Early in his reign he went to Dabra Bankual, to receive the



## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

blessing of the Abūna Madhānina 'Egzī'c, who was then a very old man. During his reign the Khalīfah of Egypt demanded excessive taxes from Abbā Mark, Patriarch of Alexandria, for he believed that the Christians were exceedingly rich; and when the Patriarch refused to pay his extortionate demands, the Khalīfah had him arrested and cast into prison. When Newāya Krestōs heard of this he seized all the Egyptian merchants in the country, and sent out horsemen to drive the caravans from Cairo over the frontiers away from Abyssinia. By these means he did great damage to the trade between Egypt and Abyssinia, both by sea and by land, and the people of Egypt complained loudly and bitterly about the Khalīfah's avarice, and the bad government of his Wazīr. At length the Khalīfah ordered Mark to be set at liberty, and entreated him to use his influence with the king of Abyssinia so that the caravans might have way-leave as before.

Newāya Krestōs carried on no great war, but though his reign was on the whole a peaceful one, he did not hesitate to keep the people of 'Adal in order when necessary. Alī, the son of Šabr ad-Dīn, revolted and was deposed and kept in prison for eight years, during which period his brother Aḥmad Ḥezba 'Ar'ed reigned. He obtained his release from prison and returned to 'Adal, and expelled his brother who took refuge in Abyssinia. Ḥaqq ad-Dīn, grandson of Alī, managed to make himself master of 'Īfāt, and was able to defeat the bodies of troops, 30,000 strong, which Newāya Krestōs had sent to help Alī. The translation of the body of Takla Hāymānōt took place in the 25th year of the reign of Newāya Krestōs, on the 12th day of the month Gēnbot (begins May 6). Barbara, the daughter of Newāya Krestōs, became a nun in Dabra Darēt, which was ruled by Aron, the Thaumaturge. (Basset, p. 238.) The details of the war in 'Adal will be found in Maḳrīzī, *Hist. Reg. Islam*, pp. 17-20.

NEWĀYA MĀRYĀM WEDEM 'ASFARĒ ንዋየ ግርግጥ፣  
ወ-ድም፣ አስፈራ፣ OR GERMA 'ASFARE ግርግ፣ አስፈራ።

Newāya Māryām was the eldest son of Newāya Krestōs, and he reigned 10 years, 1372-1382; his name means "Vessel of Mary." In his reign Ḥaqq ad-Dīn, king of 'Adal, fought a great battle with

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

the Abyssinians, and was killed (A.H. 776 = A.D. 1374-5). He was succeeded by his brother Sa'ad ad-Dīn. Whether Newāya Krestōs was present at the battle is not known, and the Chronicles say that "nothing is known about him." Newāya Māryām died without issue and was succeeded by his brother Dāwīt.

### DĀWĪT I ዳዊት።

Dāwīt (David I) was the second son of Newāya Krestōs, and he reigned 29 years, 1382-1411. During his reign the war between the Arabs and Christians was prosecuted with great vigour on both sides. Sa'ad ad-Dīn defeated the Abyssinians under Aman Morfa, the general of the Nagāshī, and took Zalān and captured much spoil, and a little later he took the towns of Zamdūwah and Bāli. Another army, led by Djān Ḥash, was sent by the Nagāshī to 'Adal, but it was defeated by the Muslim officer Asad. A little later the Christians in a fierce fight killed the Amīr Muḥammad, and massacred all his soldiers with the exception of one horseman who escaped. Emboldened by this striking success, the Nagāshī sent another army commanded by General Bār wā, who defeated Sa'ad ad-Dīn, and drove him to take refuge in Zaila' where he besieged him. The town was without water for three days, and when it capitulated the Christians went in and massacred Sa'ad ad-Dīn and every one they found (A.H. 805 = A.D. 1402-3). They destroyed the mosques and built churches, and for twenty years or so the Arabs were forced to endure every insult which the Christians could devise and inflict upon them. In the reign of David I a piece of the wood of the True Cross was brought to Abyssinia from Jerusalem, with whom the kings had always maintained frequent communication. There were great rejoicings throughout the country, and the Nagāshī was so much pleased that he ordered the vests (capa) of the priests, which until that time were undecorated, to be embroidered with flowers. The Nagāshī, like all Abyssinians, was a great lover of horses, and one day when he was examining a fine but restive and vicious horse, the animal lashed out and smote the king on the head with one of his hoofs, and fracturing his skull killed him straightway. He was buried in the Monastery of St Stephen on the Island of Dāgā, which is situated in Lake Ṣānā. A monument set up at Gēmbarū commemorates

## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

the accident. He abdicated in 1411 and died on the 6th of October 1413.

According to Maḳrīzī, David sent twenty-two camels laden with gifts to Barḳūḳ, Sulṭān of Egypt. He had two wives called Şeyōn Mangashā and 'Egzī'e Kebra, who gave him four sons, all of whom reigned over Abyssinia.

### TĒWÖDERÖS (THEODORE I) ተዋድሮስ፡ ወልደ፡ አንበሳ።

Theodore I, surnamed the "Son of the Lion," was a son of David I and reigned three years, 1411-1414; his mother was Queen Şeyōn Mangashā. Brucc says (*Travels*, II, p. 243), that something brilliant must have happened under this Nagāshī, for his reign is the "most favourite epoch in Abyssinia." His kindness and generosity were such that a cycle of legends has grown up about his reign. It is even said that he will rise again and reign for 1000 years, during which time there will be no wars, and every one will live in happiness and enjoy peace and plenty. The most important historical fact about his reign is that he annulled the agreement which Yekūnō 'Amlāk made with Takla Hāymānōt that one-third of the country was to be sequestrated to the Church for ever. He arranged that each province should set apart certain lands as church property, and many of his descendants and successors have considered that his generosity was too great. The *Synaxarium* says that he was a very religious man and that he was a great lover of sacred literature; he was a good friend to the poor to whom he gave alms liberally, and he built many churches, and had the gift of working miracles. He excelled in horsemanship and was an expert in the use of the bow. He wished to make the pilgrimage to Jerusalem, but was dissuaded from it by the Abūna Mark, who feared for his personal safety. He died on the 29th of the month Sanē and was buried in Tadbāba Māryām.

### YESḐAḐ ይስሐቅ።

Yeshāḳ (Isaac I), who was surnamed Gabra Maskal, was the second son of David I, and brother of Theodore I, and reigned 15 years (1414-1429). He made an expedition into the country of Wagarā ወገራ። and attacked Bētā 'Ashūr, where the Falashās of Marabā had rebelled. Wagarā is a province of Amḥarā, and lies

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

north of Gondar and west of Samēn. He deposed twenty-four judges who disapproved of the king's expedition to Wagarā, and he defeated the rebels at Kōsōgē ከሶጌ, a little to the north of Gondar. In commemoration of his victory he built a church there called Yesḥaq-Dabr, and he built many churches in Dambeyā and Wagarā. The Arabs, or Moors, continued their attacks on the provinces of Abyssinia, and Isaac set to work to train his army to meet them. According to Maḳrīzī, he employed one of the Mamlūks who had fled to Abyssinia to drill his soldiers, and another refugee called Ṭanbaghā, who had been a governor in Upper Egypt, also drilled the troops, and taught the Abyssinians how to make and use the so-called "Greek fire," *Nafṭ ḡṡṡ*. When the re-establishment of the army was finished Isaac began to persecute the Muslims who were domiciled in his country, and determined to invade the Arab kingdoms of 'Adal and 'Īfāt; and he wrote to the "Kings of the Franks" and asked them to assist him. After the death of Sa'ad ad-Dīn, his six sons crossed over into Arabia and took refuge with Naṣr Aḥmad ibn Ashrāf Isma'īl, who protected them and provided them with means for attacking the Naḡāshī and his kingdom. The eldest of them, Ṣabr ad-Dīn II, was chosen as leader, and he went and established himself at Sayārah, where he was joined by many of his father's old soldiers. Ṣabr ad-Dīn II then attacked the Christians, and in the battles at Sarjān and Zikr Amḥarah, defeated them. Soon after this Nadjt Baḳal, the Abyssinian general, led his army against the Muslims, and having got them on the run drove them out of the towns which they had seized, but pressing on too far and too fast he was defeated and slain by Muḥammad, a brother of Ṣabr ad-Dīn II, and Ḥarb Djāwush, one of his officers. Another brother, called 'Umar, laid waste the Abyssinian territory of Aldjab, but soon after this the Christians defeated the Arabs in a decisive battle, and as each side had suffered severely both Muslims and Christians were glad to keep the peace for a number of years. Ṣabr ad-Dīn died A.H. 825 = A.D. 1421-22, and his brother and successor Maṣṣūr promptly renewed the war. He was victorious in the battles at Jadāyah and at Mukhā, but subsequently Isaac defeated him, captured him and his brother Muḥammad in 1424-25, and kept them in prison until they died. The war was continued by Jamāl ad-Dīn, and Ḥarb

## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

Djāwush defeated the Christians in three important battles at Bāli, Jadāyah and Yajzah. He burnt all the churches and seized large numbers of the Christians, whom he sold in the slave markets at nominal prices. In one of his campaigns he and his brothers laid waste Dawārō, and chased Isaac across that province as far as the Nile. In spite of their losses the Abyssinians managed to put armies in the field time after time, and at the battle of Harjāi the Muslims were defeated with such loss that all fighting was discontinued for a time. Isaac was assassinated in the year 1427, and was buried in Tadbāba Māryām. Bruce says (*Travels*, II. p. 244) that Isaac was a prince of great piety and courage. He was succeeded by his son

### ‘ENDREYĀS አንድርያስ

‘Endreyās (Andrew) reigned four, or six, or seven months, and died in March 1430. He was buried in Tadbāba Māryām.

### TAKLA MĀRYĀM OR HEZBA NĀÑ ተክላ ማርያም ሕዝብ ናኝ

Takla Māryām was the third son of David I, and brother of Theodore and Isaac, and he reigned three years 1430–1433; his name means “Plant of Mary.” He was succeeded by

### SARWĒ IYĀSŪS MEḤREKA NĀÑ ሠርዌ አያሱስ ምስርክ ናኝ

Sarwē Iyāsūs was the eldest son of Takla Māryām, who reigned four, or eight, months in 1433(?); his name means “Prop of Jesus.” It was either this king or his brother who overran East Africa and made a truce during the fight between ‘Īfāt and Abyssinia, and who died of the plague in 1433–34. Jamāl ad-Dīn was assassinated by his friends in 1431–32, and it was his brother and successor Shahab ad-Dīn who avenged his death and continued the war against the Christians. He reconquered the country of Bāli and burned six churches.

### ‘ĀMDA IYĀSŪS BADEL NĀÑ ሞላ አያሱስ ባድላ ናኝ

‘Āmda Iyāsūs was the second son of Takla Māryām, and reigned eight months, and died in June 1434, leaving no issue. The Chronicles supply no information about his acts, and the rapid succession of occupants of the throne of the Nagāshī puzzled even Maḵrīzī.

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

### ZAR'A YĀ'KÖB ከርእሥ ያዕቆብ። CONSTANTINE I

Zar'a Yā'kōb was the fourth son of David I, by Queen 'Egzī'e Kebra, and brother of Theodore, Isaac, and Takla Māryām; he reigned 34 (35 ?) years and 2 months (1434-1468). His name means "Seed of Jacob," he adopted as his throne name Ḳuestanīnōs ቀስተንኤስ, *i.e.* Constantine. The summary of his reign given in the Chronicle published by Basset (*Études*, p. 102) is as follows: "In his time debates on the Faith took place. Abbā Giyōrgīs debated with a certain Frank, and ended by composing the Book of Mystery. In the 10th year of the reign of this king, Abbā John of Wifāt ዊፋት died: the king died on the 3rd epagomenal day and was buried on the Island of Dāgā." In other words, the Chronicler was anxious to note merely the chief religious event of his reign, and his death day. It is only from other native documents, and information derived from European countries, that we know that Zar'a Yā'kōb was not only a pious king and a lover of literature, but a brave and talented soldier; there is no doubt that he was one of the greatest kings of Abyssinia. He was the first Nagāshī to realize the fact that unless he could obtain the help and support of some European kings, his country and his Church would be destroyed by the Muḥammadans whose power, and influence and wealth were increasing.

The Abbā Giyōrgīs (George) mentioned above was the son of Ḥezba-Şeyōn, and a native of the town of Saglā in Amḥarā. His book was devoted to refuting the heresies and doctrines of Sabellius, Arius, Nestorius, Photinus, Origen, Biton (?), Eutyches, Severus of Antioch, Manes, etc. The "Frank" with whom he discussed the Faith before the king was Francisco di Branca-Leone, a Venetian monk and painter, who lived and married and died in Abyssinia. It was probably he who painted for Zar'a Yā'kōb's successor the picture of the Virgin and Child which created such a disturbance in Abyssinia. The painter had represented the Virgin holding the Child on her left arm as was customary in Europe, but according to the Abyssinians the left hand is the "hand of dishonour," and they wanted to destroy the picture. This, however, the king refused to do.

## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

The chief authority for the history of the reign of Zar'a Yā'qōb is Brit. Mus. MS. Orient. No. 821 which was compiled A.M. 7276 = A.D. 1784 by order of the Dadjazmatch Hāyly ሕይሊ in the first year of the reign of İyāsū III, and the text of the section which deals with this king was edited with a French translation by Perruchon in *Chroniques de Zar'a Yā'eqōb et de Ba'eda Māryām*, Paris, 1893. This valuable document begins with an account of the persecution of the idolaters at the beginning of the king's reign. It appears that all who admitted that they worshipped Dasek ጊሙ and the Dail, and Guidale, Tafant, Dino, Maḳuawze and other idols were seized and decapitated before the public. Spies were appointed to search and "smell out" heretics, and the king's sons Galāwdēwōs, 'Āmda Māryām, Zar'a Abrahām and Batra Şeyōn, and his daughters Del Samerā, Rōm Ganayalā and Adal Mangeshā, were slain as the result of the information supplied by the official spies. A royal decree ordered every Christian to bear on his forehead a fillet inscribed "Belonging to the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit." And fillets had to be worn on the arms, that on the right being inscribed "I deny the Devil in [the name of] Christ God," and that on the left, "I deny Dasek, the accursed. I am the servant of Mary, the mother of the Creator of all the world." The house of the man who disobeyed the edict was looted and he was either flogged or killed. The persecution was directed by one Zar'a Şeyōn, who was nicknamed the "Seed of Satan," and whose activities stirred up the people to appeal to the king, and to prove to him the extent of his wickedness and cruelty; after this he was removed from his office and deported to Hāyik, on the frontier of Shoa. Another monster of iniquity was the 'Āḳābē Sa'āt (*i.e.* Keeper of the Hour), called 'Amhā Şeyōn. He had access to the king at all times, no one dared to enter his house, and every demand he made on the people had to be satisfied. His personal servants were not allowed to associate with the people, they had no intercourse with women, and could not cut their hair without the king's permission; if they ate or drank in any house but their own they were killed. They were never allowed out of the sight of their "governor" the Malkaḳā. When the king knew of the evil deeds of the Keeper of the Hour and other high officials, he deported them, and appointed his daughters Madhen Zamadā and Berhān Zamadā in their places,

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

and made their sisters governors of districts, viz. Del Shamerā in 'Angōt, Bāḥr Mangashā in Gedem, Sōfyā in 'Īfāt, and so on. But apparently he found this arrangement unsatisfactory, for later he appointed a class of officers called 'Adakshatnat አደክሽተኝተ, and each governor had a special title in his province. Zar'a Yā'qōb seems to have been the first Nagāshī to attempt to organize his country in this way.

But this arrangement did not please all his governors, for the Garād of Ḥadyā rebelled and refused to pay tribute. This Garād was called Māhikō ጠላክ, and he was the son of Meḥmad, who held the like dignity, and the brother of 'Itē (for 'Itēgē) Jān Zēlā, who held the office of Ḳaṣṣ'a Ba'altīhat, *i.e.* lady on the right-hand side [of the king]. He had made great preparations for war, and had taken as his allies the governors of 'Adal and the people of Ḥadyā. The Garāds of Ḥadyā were Gudolā, Dihō, Ḥadabō, Ganazō, Sagā, Gab, Ḳab'ēn, Gogala and Halab. Acting on the advice of the Garād Gadāytō, the king deposed Māhikō, and made his uncle Bāmō, Garād of Dagēn and Garād of Ḥadyā in his place. Then Bāmō [and Gadāytō], accompanied by the regiment called "Dagger in the enemy" (Baṣar Shōtal በር፡ሾተል), set out for Ḥadyā and when they arrived there with the soldiers all the governors who had revolted came and made their submission to Bāmō. Māhikō, on hearing this, collected his troops and set out for the country of 'Adal, but he was pursued by the "Daggers in the enemy," who came up with him just as he was about to enter a fortress. He was in a terrible fright, for as he went his men unfastened their baggage and cast on the roads cloaks of silk and muslin, hoping that the pursuers would stop and pick them up, and so give him more time to escape. But Bāmō's men rode on and caught him and killed him, and cut off his head and hands and feet. When the news reached the king he sang and danced "as he was wont to do at Eastertide." When Bāmō brought the head, etc. to Dabra Berḥān, the king had them hung up by the Shargūn ሠርጉን, or great gate, where the dogs and hyenas found them. Gadāytō was made free from the authority of the Garād of Ḥadyā for three generations, the soldier who had killed Māhikō received a grant of land, and all the other soldiers were given rich robes of honour.



## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

Zar'a Yā'qōb next devoted himself to building a palace at Dabra Beshān, and a Djāgoal ጃገልጃገ or great palisade to surround it, and he directed the operations personally. On the top of his church he placed a gold cross: such a thing had never been done before. Within the palisade he built a Nāzrēt Bēt, or storehouse for valuable objects. In Amḥarā, in the "land of the Sun," he built two churches, the one called Makāna Gōl and the other Dabra Naguadguād, and endowed them. About the same time he was formally crowned at Aksūm, and appointed officials called Tshēwā ጭዋጭ over all the provinces, and enlarged the power of some officials and reduced that of others. He went to the country of Dagō where he had lived formerly, and founded in a most beautiful place among the mountains a church in honour of Our Lady Mary, which he endowed richly; he also established there a body of priests whose duty it was to celebrate the praise of God. He called the church "Makāna Māryām," and intended Queen Gērā Ba'altīḥat, who was called Ferē Māryām and was the mother of Berhān Zamadā, Madhen Zamadā, Ṣabala Māryām and Del Debābā, to be buried therein. The church was surrounded by high mountains.

In the seventh year of his reign, about 1441, he left Amḥarā and came to 'Agūbā አጉባ in the district of Tagolat ጥገለጥገ where he kept the festival of Epiphany. This festival is the greatest festival of the Abyssinian Church. It begins with the singing of psalms, and all day long the clergy and laity, women excepted, plunge themselves into a lake or river (Basset, *Jnl. Soc. As.*, 1881, p. 146). Whilst he was there he heard the news that the church of Our Lady Mary at Meṭmāk, wherein the Virgin herself had appeared, had been destroyed by the Muslims because many of their co-religionists had been converted to Christianity after seeing the miracle. The king and his court burst into tears when they heard the news, and then he decided to build a church in the place where he was, and to call it Dabra Meṭmāk. This was done at once, and he endowed it with lands, and appointed a body of priests to minister in it.

But he was disturbed during his rest in the country which he loved by the news that the "beast Badlāy," 'Arwē Badlāy አርዌ ባደላይ, had embarked on a war against him. He left Dagō at once, and travelling swiftly arrived in Dawārō with an army whose

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

general was called Ḥasāb Bawasan. The Garād of Ḥadyā appealed to him for help, but at the same time assured Badlāy that he was an ally of his. Thus was Badlāy deceived. Zar'a Yā'qōb sent to the Garād of Ḥadyā and told him to stay at 'Aysfars አይፈርስ until he told him to come. The name of the Garād was Meḥmad, and he was the father of Queen 'Elēnī (Helena) Ḳasā Ba'alṭiḥat; as he was a Muslim like Badlāy the king doubted his good faith. When Zar'a Yā'qōb saw Badlāy's army he was afraid, and he prayed to God to help him and the small force which he had with him to win the day. The "Master of the Hour" also begged him not to attempt to fight with so few soldiers, especially as he had made no plan of battle, and had not even arrayed himself in his panoply of war. But the king putting his confidence in God at once gave orders to take the parasols ደብብ and blow the trumpets ምስርቃና and beat the big drums Bear and Lion, and unfurl the flags, and he advanced and overthrew a part of Badlāy's army. Badlāy had no idea that it was the king in person who was attacking him, and was greatly disturbed. A certain soldier shot an arrow at the face of Badlāy, who caught it in his hand, and then rushed up to the king intending to seize him; as he came on the king drove his spear through his neck and cut his throat, and Badlāy fell dead. When the Muslims saw that Badlāy was dead, they took to flight, but were pursued by the Christians who speared them and cut them down as they ran. Badlāy's brother Karadīn ከርዲን and his men made good their escape as far as the Ḥawāsha ሐዋሽ river, but whilst they were preparing to cross it Djān Ṣaganā fell upon them and slew them, and cut off Karadīn's head and brought it to the king. And he rejoiced at the miracle which had been wrought for him on Christ's Birthday, the 29th day of the month Taḥshāsh = Dec. 25. The body of Badlāy was cut into pieces, which were distributed among the principal cities of Abyssinia. The king rewarded Meḥmad, the Garād of Ḥadyā, with robes of honour, and all the loot taken from Badlāy's camp was divided among the churches of Dabra Meṭmāk, Ṣeyōn and other sanctuaries.

Then Zar'a Yā'qōb returned to his native village of Ṭelḳ ጥልቅ in the province of Faṭigār ፈጠጋር and built a temple to Michael; in the place where his father had lived he built two other churches, Martula Mikā'el and 'Aṣada Mikā'el. In the country of 'Enzardā

## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

he built a church called Dabra Selhīn, and from there he passed on and crossed the River Warārī and came to 'Ībā in Shoa. Soon after his arrival there a great commotion was caused by the Dakīka 'Eṣṭifān ጸቀቀ ለስጢጥስ: "the children of 'Eṣṭifān" or Stephanites, who refused to bow the knee to Our Lady Mary and to the Cross of her Son. The king summoned them to his presence and debated the matter with them, but though he confounded them in argument they refused to change their opinions. Then the court being assembled, and the pilgrims who had just returned from Jerusalem, it was decided to inflict the punishment of death on them. Their noses were cut off, and their tongues cut out, and then they were stoned to death on the second day of the month of Yakātīt (Feb. 7). Thirty-eight days later, on the tenth day of Magābīt (March 17) a wonderful light appeared in the sky and remained there for several days. The church of Dabra Berhān was built there in eight days. The light appeared again at the celebration of the Eucharist, and again at the singing of the hymn "God reigneth." Whilst at Dabra Berhān the king sat in judgment on his people generally: some he slew, some he deported, and some he promoted to honour. When the plague attacked the land he built the church Bēta Qīrḳōs, and the plague was stayed, as far as his palace was concerned. He ordered his sons and the queens to make gifts to the church of silken hangings and books, and decreed that only the oaths taken in it were binding.

Zar'a Yā'qōb next made regulations concerning the Faith of his people. He decreed that both the Sabbath and the Sunday were to be kept holy, that the 29th day of each month was to be observed as a festival in honour of the birth of Christ, and that the thirty-two festivals of Our Lady Mary were to be kept as strictly as Sunday. He established a monthly festival in honour of Michael, and festivals in honour of the nine Archangels, and the four celestial beasts, and the Prophets and the Apostles, and decreed that alms were to be given on each of them, and distributions of bread made to the poor. All these commands were written in his works The Book of the Incarnation, The Book of the Light, The Book of the Birth, The Book of the Abjuration, The Book of the Abjuration of Satan, The Book of the Substance, The Keeper of the Mysteries, and God reigneth. Whilst Zar'a Yā'qōb

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

was engaged in this work, which occupied about 14 years, he lived at Dabra Berhān, but paid occasional visits to neighbouring places like Dabra Meṭmāḳ. He died at Dabra Berhān, and was buried in Dabra Naguadguād. At the end of the account of his reign summarized above there follows a second section containing five chapters, in which are given a number of details not found in the first. Thus we find that when the king wished to translate the body of his father David I (1382-1411) to Dabra Naguadguād from Aksūm, the men of Muwā'āl refused to deliver up the coffin to his messengers. He was a generous benefactor of the churches. Thus to Dabra Libānōs, which was formerly called Dabra 'Asebō **ደብረ-አክቦ**, he gave 150 ounces of gold, 30 pieces of silk and gold brocade, 7 vestments of pure silk, 7 gold fans, 2000 oxen, and 100 measures of the land of 'Alāt. The list of his gifts and endowments of the Cathedral at Aksūm fills many pages, and the reader will find them all described in the famous Book of Aksūm (ed. Rossini, *Liber Axumae*, p. 27 ff.).

Zar'a Yā'qōb regarded himself as the head of the Abyssinian Church, and he laid down rules for its guidance and maintenance both by his decrees delivered orally and set down in writing in his books. Of the many altars to be set up in the churches there must be, he ordered, one dedicated to the Virgin Mary. He decided that the baptistery must always be on the right and outside the church. The priests were ordered by him to teach the people the Belief, the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, the Commandments of the Church, the belief in One God in Three Persons, the spiritual birth of the Son, Who proceeded from the Father, without a mother, and His second birth from Mary without a father. This religious instruction must be given in the churches and monasteries every Sunday, and every day of festival, and the civil governors throughout the country were commanded to confiscate the possessions of every one who did not obey these instructions. And Zar'a Yā'qōb took care to have the clergy instructed. He sent to the monks of the Abyssinian Monastery in Jerusalem the Ethiopic (Gē'ēz) text of the Canons of the Apostles and the Councils recognized by the Abyssinian Church, viz. the 127 Canons of the Apostles, the 38 Canons of Hippolytus, the Canons of the Councils of Nicaea, Ancyra, Neo-Cesaraea, the Canons of Basil and John Chrysostom,

## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

and the Council of Constantinople. He had the Miracles of the Virgin translated from Arabic into Ethiopic in the 7th year of his reign, when Abbā Michael and Abbā Gabriel were the Metropolitans of Abyssinia. In his reign too was composed the *Orgaon Dengel* by Abbā George the Armenian, and the famous Chronicle of George of 'Āmid, better known as Al-Makin, was translated into Ethiopic.

Zar'a Yā'kōb saw that the growing power of the Arabs was a menace to his country, and he decided that he would seek the help of the Pope with the view of joining the Abyssinian Church to that of Rome, and probably also in the hope that some European power would give him material, as well as spiritual, assistance. The Patriarch of Alexandria approved of his views, and two missions were sent to Rome, the first under Abbā Andrew, the archimandrite of the monastery of Saint Anthony of Egypt, and the other under Peter the deacon. Zar'a Yā'kōb sent two Abyssinian monks from the monastery at Jerusalem to the Council of Florence (1431-1445), under Pope Eugene IV, and they convinced the assembly that their religious dogmas coincided with those of the Latins with the exception of those which concerned the double nature of Christ. The Abyssinians contended that it was only His divine nature that became incarnate, while the Latins held that He possessed two natures, the divine and the human. This remarkable embassy is the subject of a painting still preserved in the Vatican, and according to Bruce (*Travels*, II. 247) it is the only evidence that such an embassy was ever sent. It is said that Zar'a Yā'kōb signed the decree which united the Abyssinian and Roman Churches, and it was probably as a result of this that the Pope permitted him to found an Abyssinian Monastery in Rome. Some authorities think that communications had passed between Pope Alexander III in 1177 and the Nagāshī, and that two kings of Abyssinia had sent letters to the Pope in 1297 and 1305, but the evidence that such was the case is unsatisfactory, to say the least of it. There is little doubt that Zar'a Yā'kōb was the first king of Abyssinia to open up communication with the Pope.

The last years of the reign of Zar'a Yā'kōb were troubled by the frequent attempts made to dethrone him by his son Ba'eda Māryām, who was greatly aided and abetted by his mother the

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

Queen Şeyōn Mōgasā. The young man was anxious to succeed to the throne, and probably felt that his father was reigning too long, and his mother seems to have shared the same views. At length the king came to think that the queen was conspiring with the principal ecclesiastics of Abyssinia to dethrone him, and he ordered her to be flogged. This order was carried out, and she was beaten so cruelly that after a short time she died and was buried secretly in the church called Maḩdasa Māryām near Dabra Berhān. When her son heard of her death and burial, on the day of the anniversary of her death he took incense and candles and went and made an offering in the church where she was buried. When the king heard of this he was filled with rage, and ordered Ba'eda Māryām to be tied hand and foot, and he inflicted very severe punishments on him and his servant Maḩarī Krestōs for a long time. At length the priests of Dabra Lībānōs and Dabra Kasō, and 'Abūḩir, the prior of 'Endagabtan አቡ ቂርብ አንደገብጠኛ, wrote to the king and entreated him not to ill-treat his son, for he was under the protection of Takla Hāymānōt and themselves. The king released his son forthwith and his hatred for him was turned into ardent affection. He heaped every kind of honour on him and gave him authority over all his officials, including the Djān Şerāg ገንዘብኛ. When the king was seriously ill he sent for his son to come to him, and when he was dying, all the princes except Ba'eda Māryām were sent out of the room, and the king told him that he was to succeed him as king. Zar'a Yā'ḩōb died on the third day of Paguemen (Sept. 6), on Sunday at the ninth hour (3 p.m.). Thus died one of the greatest kings of Abyssinia, who because of his wisdom and foresight and understanding gained, even during his lifetime, the reputation of being a second Solomon.

### BA'EDA MĀRYĀM I በአዲሳ ግርዖት, SURNAMED CYRIACUS

Ba'eda Māryām was born about 1448, and the early years of his life were passed at Dabra Berhān; he reigned ten years, 1468-1478. His name means "he who is in the hand of Mary." The Chronicle (Basset, p. 102) says that it was he who caused the "Frank" (*i.e.* Branca-Leone) to paint the picture of Mary and Christ which so greatly exasperated the Abyssinians. This picture was placed in the 'Atronsa Māryām (*i.e.* Throne of Mary), which was in

## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

a town of the same name in the south of Amḥarā, on the left bank of the 'Abāy river, and there it remained until the third year of the reign of Theophilus (1709). In that year the Gallas came and broke open the church, killed the priests and carried off all the men and women into captivity. The picture and the coffin containing the remains of Ba'eda Māryām were hurled over a precipice on Sunday the 19th day of the month Naḥasē (August 23). From the description of the reign of Ba'eda Māryām as found in the Chronicle of Ḥāylū (Brit. Mus. MS. No. 821) we obtain the following: As soon as his father was dead he summoned Abbā Matthew of Dabra Dāmō, and other clergy, and giving them incense told them to pray for his father and himself. On the following morning he issued a proclamation pardoning all prisoners and giving all exiles permission to return to their homes. Then he took the direction of the cavalry into his own hands, and nominated a set of new rulers over the provinces. He revived the old organization of the country which his father had set aside. He had all the men who had made false charges of idolatry against certain people brought before him, and they were condemned to be punished by the whip of cords, or by rods (bastinado), according to their degrees of guilt. The festival of the Cross was celebrated soon after at Dabra Berḥān, and the king made a tour of the churches with his face and form uncovered; this no other king had ever done, and the people rejoiced greatly. He gave orders that the contents of the four great treasure stores, Nazret Bēt, Mangeshet Bēt, Barakat Bēt and Gadal Bēt should be transferred to the Gasambē ገሰጽ of Shoa. He visited Dabra Meṭmāḵ and many other towns, and came to Naguadguād and entered the monastery, and 40 days after his father's death he attended the memorial service held in his honour. He went on to 'Atronsa 'Egzi'etna Māryām, and cleared a place in the forest where he built a large church. The site had been bought by Sayfa 'Ar'ed (1346-1374), who wished to build a temple there but had not done so, and Zar'a Yā'qōb had sent an altar there and called its resting-place Dabra Parāklitōs. Ba'eda Māryām furnished the church with great splendour and endowed it richly. At one time this church possessed a very fine library. He went on to Djedjenō ደጅጅኖ and made ready for his coronation. Three pieces of wood were inscribed with the names of Gabra Maṣḵal, Dāwīt

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

(David) and Constantine, and the king drew one of them, and fate gave him the name of David for his throne name. When the king entered the coronation chamber a bull and a lion were brought to him and he was expected to cut the throat of each: but, like his father, he refused to do it and ordered the bull to be killed and the lion to be set free. When the coronation was over he returned to 'Atronsa Māryām and then he built the temple of Meshala Māryām.

At this time he heard that some people were complaining that he passed his life on horseback, and neglected the kingdom; the malcontents were seized and brought before him, and when by his orders the muscles of their feet were slit they were deported to various places. And when certain men said that he was more severe than his father, he sent out heralds to order the people to use moderation in their speech. Whilst he was in this neighbourhood an embassy from Meḥmad, son of 'Arwē Badlāy, king of 'Adal, came and brought gifts and asked him to make peace with them. They promised to bring an annual tribute if he would prevent his soldiers from overrunning their country. He entertained them royally and gave them rich robes of honour. He then went on a hunting expedition in the district of Guadalō, and when this was ended he went to Dagō and built there the church of Dabtarā Māryām.

Ba'eda Māryām next began to make an expedition into the eastern and south-eastern parts of his kingdom. He and his army marched to Yatchēkā ሃጽጽጽ, and the people of the frontier town of Ḥayk received him with great joy. From Dankā he went on to Yegzā ይገዳ, and all the people turned out to greet him gladly; their clergy and their wives were with them, and the former sang hymns and the latter danced to tambourines. Still marching eastwards he came to a very high mountain, where he ordered a church to be built and called Manbara Māryām; passing on he came to Wānzāgē and Ḳuāḳuārā, where he halted and spent Saturday and Sunday. On Monday he came to the River Mērā ማረጃ, which flows into the Takaze, and then to Zabel. Ba'eda Māryām had now reached territory where the natives were likely to show hostility to him, and he reviewed his army, and then made them march in battle order as far as Ṣawetā, that is to say to the land of Mangafō, where his predecessor Isaac (1414-1429) had set up his tent. Here




## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

the various divisions of his army camped, each having a camp to itself. He next issued an order commanding all men whose wives were with them to send them back to 'Ayde'a አይደኑ, where Queens Gerā Ba'altihāt and Kañ Ba'altihāt were living; he who obeyed not this order would be slain. Officers and men were then sent on by him to Mabṛā, ostensibly to prepare the way, but they were ordered to give battle to any enemies they might meet on the road. His objective was the country of Dōbe'a ዶቤዳ, which was inhabited by cunning savages who raided caravans and killed at sight, and always saved themselves by flight. When the men of Dōbe'a saw the leader of the army wearing a lion's skin, and holding shield, lance and bow in his hands, they knew he was the king, and they swiftly fled and disappeared in their hiding-places. Their oxen, camels and asses they had taken care to send for safety into the country of Takinō ተክኖ, a country to the east of Abyssinia, and situated on the sea-coast, heard that the Nagāshī was going to make war on Dōbe'a, he sent him gifts, viz. a horse, a mule laden with dates, a shield and two javelins, with this message: "My Lord, I also am in my camp ready to prevent these people from coming to attack [thee]. If they are thy enemies I will stop them and seize them. This is the reason why I have not come to thee." The king replied, "Thou hast done well: let them not enter thy territory." On the day of the Epiphany the king had a pit dug in the earth, and when it had been filled with water, which had to be brought a considerable distance, he celebrated the festival of the Baptism of Christ.

This done Ba'eda sent out a company of soldiers to fight the men of Dōbe'a, but to the king's annoyance the savages defeated his men and killed many of the Christians. It seems that the soldiers should not have engaged the enemy without his consent, and that he wished to take part in the fight. To punish these soldiers he had the lung of an ass and the lung of an ox tied to them, and kept them standing naked for ten days in his royal tent. In his wrath he took an oath before his whole army and swore that he would not leave that country until he had tilled the ground and sown wheat in it, and his horse had eaten of the crop that grew from it. And turning to his men he said, "Fight boldly, and give

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

up all ideas of returning to your homes." Then he sent troops under Djān Zeg, the Garād of Bālī, to carry the war into the country of Gām, but the enemy killed him and large numbers of his soldiers. The king was anxious as to the success of this raid, and he sent messengers after the Garād to find out what had happened to his general: these brought back to the king, very late at night, the news of the defeat of the Christians. Having exhorted his soldiers to have no fear, but to trust in God, Who would help them in His good season, he evacuated the country of Dōbe'a and retired to Ḥayā in Tigray. The climate of Dōbe'a was, and still is, very unhealthy, and his soldiers were suffering seriously from intestinal complaints. He pitched his camp at Ḥayā, and sent for his queens to come there, and he ordered his soldiers to send for their wives and settle down in Tigray.

At that time Djān 'Amōrā was fighting against 'Ambā Naḥad, the governor  of Ṣalamt, and Ba'eda Māryām sent for him and questioned him about 'Ambā Naḥad. The warrior reported that he and his men had been fighting the enemy according to his orders, and then asked the king why he had not sent for them to go and fight the men of Dōbe'a. And he added, "We will destroy the men of Dōbe'a for thee." Then the king fasted and prayed for victory, and made a great votive offering to the Virgin Mary, and sent 1000 ounces of gold to Tigray for distribution among the monks and the poor and needy. When the men of Dōbe'a saw that the mind of the king was set upon their destruction, they collected their camels, oxen, wives and children and departed in various directions, and their governors having loaded all their possessions on the backs of beasts did the same. Hearing this, the king gave orders to the governors of Tigray and Dāmōt to pursue them, and at the ninth hour he sent out his cavalry to help them. He himself left his camp at midnight, and, riding all night, came up with the enemy in the morning and attacked them forthwith. An indiscriminate massacre of men, women and children took place, the fugitives were ridden down and slain, and all the possessions of the enemy fell into the hands of the Christians. Ba'eda Māryām made his winter quarters in that place, and having given to the Abūna, Yemreḥana Krestōs, 215 ounces of gold, a cross of gold, mitres and a cope, sent him back to his own country. Later many of the men

## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

of Dōbe'a became Christians, and the king showed favour to them, and restored to them their own cattle and added to them many which he had looted in Wadj and Ganz, which lay to the south of Shoa. He built a church in honour of the Virgin Mary and planted avenues of orange and citron trees, and vines, and grew crops of wheat on which his horse fed according to his vow. Whilst he was in this country he made the lady Ba'āleta Sheḥenā a queen, and she took the name of Dāwīt 'Ērā ዳዊት-ኤራ።

It was the king's intention to go to Aksūm to be crowned, and he sent orders to his officers and governors to make all the necessary preparations; but hearing that Lada'e 'Esmān ለደዕ-አስግን፣ king of Adal, the successor of Meḥmad, was marching against him, he countermanded the orders, and told his officers to rejoin him. When they came back he marched again into Dōbe'a, where he celebrated the festival of Christ's Baptism, and ordered the death-day of the Virgin (21st of Ṭer = Jan. 27) to be celebrated as a festival. He regulated the social condition of the peoples of Angōt, and directed the people to devote themselves to agriculture and not to war, and then left Dōbe'a and marched on to Angōt. At Wāsel he ordered the queens to go with their attendants to Amḥarā and Manzeh, whilst he went on to Gedem and Lāwō Gabayā, where he took stock of his horses and his war-equipments. When in Katchḥō ቀጥጥ፣ in 'Īfāt, he learned that the people of Adal came there and was told what they did; at Ṭōbeyā ጦብያ፣ he set up a tent of *sūf* ሱፍ፣ as did his father David I (1382-1413). At Dabra Berhān he found the honeysuckle (?)-tree, *kagā* ቀጋ፣ which he had planted when he was a boy there, and he overlaid it with a covering of silk and gold brocade. Passing through Sarmāt and Zangō and Yalabāsha he was informed that his queen Rōmnā, *i.e.* the "pomegranate," had given birth to a son, and the news filled him with joy. Forty days later the child was christened 'Eskender (Alexander). Later Rōmnā gave him another son, who was called 'Enḳua 'Esrā'ēl ዕንቂ-አስራ-ኤል። At this time the men of Tanātsh and others plotted against the king, and they were seized and deported.

Whilst Ba'eda Māryām was in Abasī he sent Gabra Īyāsūs to make war in Adal, and when the general arrived there he found that the governors of the country had made a league and were about to

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

invade Abyssinia. He and his army attacked the Muslims and defeated them and took prisoner the governors Guasāj Guētā, Sid Aḥmad, Erōr, Gedāye, Kuashm, Haragāye, Farāsh Shūm and others.

After this victory Ba'eda Māryām went to Dabra Naguadguād and held a memorial service for his father, and then passed on to Kelantō and built and endowed another church. He then removed the tombs of his fathers to the church of Atronsa Māryām. That of Theodore I (1413-1414) from Mareḥa Bētē in Shoa, that of Germa Asfarē (Newāya Māryām, 1372-1382) from 'Asarō, and that of Yekūnō 'Amlāk from Yekūnō; with these were the tombs of eighteen other kings and ecclesiastical officials, and the body of Takla Īyāsūs, his beloved teacher who had taught him the Psalms. He was then formally crowned in the country of Djagnō ገገናገ and with him the queen Gērā Ba'altiḥat Djān Sayefā. And there was present Queen Kaḥ Ba'altiḥat, whose name was 'Elēnī ዕለኒ and who was greatly beloved by the king and his people. Meanwhile the people of Dōbe'a began to raid the country again and the king sent an army against them, but his soldiers were defeated and many Christians slain; in a subsequent fight the Christians were victorious, and he built a church in Dōbe'a and tried to convert the pagan negro tribes of that country to Christianity.

About this time Ba'eda Ṣeyōn determined to occupy the country of Dōbe'a, and he remained there for four consecutive years. He built a palace (?) at Wadj ወጃጃ, but in spite of this the negro peoples of the south and the Muslims of Adal on the east continued to raid the country, and he was obliged to send Maḥarī Krestōs and Gabra Īyāsūs with a large force to crush these enemies. But these generals knew apparently what the king did not, that the Abyssinians were no match for the savage peoples of the south, and that to crush them once and for all was impossible. One army set out under Maḥarī Krestōs, and was defeated in the first encounter with the warriors of Adal; the general was slain and the Christians turned and fled. The second army under Gabra Īyāsūs followed, and was cut to pieces by the Muslims, and the general slain also. These defeats afflicted the king greatly, and, feeling that he had in some way incurred the wrath of heaven, he sent 2000 ounces of gold into Tigray to be distributed among the poor, and 500 ounces to the

## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

Abūna at Dabra Lībānōs to secure the salvation of the souls of those who had been killed in the two recent defeats of his soldiers. Ba'eda Māryām died on the 12th day of Hēdār = November 19, 1478, at 'Abāsī Wērā Gabayā አበሳኝ ወረታዎች.

In the wars which 'Āmda Şeyōn and his successors had carried on against Badlāy, Meḥmad his son, and Lada'e 'Asmān, kings of Adal, their defeats were more numerous than their victories. The wars of Ba'eda Māryām, as we learn from a text published by Perruchon, were all conducted during the first six years of his reign, and his last and greatest defeat took place in 1474. After that he made no further attempt to subjugate Adal, and during the last four years of his reign he devoted himself to the development of the Christian religion in Abyssinia. He had four sons: 'Eskender and 'Enḳua 'Esrā'ēl by his wife Rōmnā ('Elēni), Theodore by his wife Erēsh-Gazēt, and Nā'od by his wife Ḳalayopā or Calliope. During the reign of Ba'eda Māryām, and whilst he was absent from his capital on a campaign, "a violent commotion arose among the clergy at home" (Bruce, *Travels*, II. p. 265). After the Council at Florence a number of Syrian and Egyptian monks came into Abyssinia with the Abūna, Yemreḥana Krestōs, and they preached the heresy which denied the consubstantiality of Christ. They admitted that He was perfect God and perfect man, but said that His human body was not made of flesh, with blood, arteries, etc., like ours, but of an ineffable substance peculiar to Himself. The clergy assembled and discussed the heresy and condemned it, and of those who professed it some were tortured to death, some were exiled to the Kolla, and the rest were stripped naked and cast adrift without meat and drink to perish in the tops of the highest mountains. The king took no part in these proceedings, which will illustrate the fanaticism of the Christians of Abyssinia at this period. Mention has already been made of the uproar in the country which was provoked by the picture of the Virgin and Child painted by Branca-Leone. In that case Ba'eda Māryām refused to listen to the popular clamour which demanded its destruction, and when many of the leaders of the malcontents were found to disappear quietly, the rank and file of them decided that they had better hold their peace. The king died of some intestinal complaint after a short illness; some think that he died of cholera, which may

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

well be the case, but others think that he died through the effects of poison administered to him by one of his fanatical subjects. Ba'eda Māryām revived the old custom of banishing the sons and brothers of the reigning king to a high mountain, where they were kept in a state prison until the king's death. The mountain chosen by him for this purpose was not Dāmō but Gēshenā. For a statement of the benefactions made to certain churches by him, see Rossini, *Liber Axumae*, No. xxiii. p. 31.

### 'ESKENDER አስክንድር፣ CONSTANTINE II ቀ-ስጠገጢኛስ።

'Eskender, or Alexander, was the son of Ba'eda Māryām by Queen Rōmnā, or 'Elēnī (*i.e.* Helena), and reigned 15 years; he ascended the throne in 1478 and died on the 12th day of the month Genbōt, A.M. 6986 = A.D. 1494. As soon as Ba'eda Māryām was dead, Rōmnā brought her son down from Mount Gēshenā, and according to his father's wish he was at once crowned king in the presence of the king's chaplain, and Tasfā Gīyōrgīs, the "Keeper of the Hour," and the Beht Wadad ብሕት፣ወደድ፣ on the right was 'Āmda Mīkā'ēl, and the Beht Wadad on the left was Badlā Re'ed. The Chronicle says that he was a child, "good, pure and sweet," and during his reign there was peace and joy throughout the country. His mother Rōmnā, or Rōmnā Wark, "the pomegranate of gold," to give her her full name, acted as regent, and she and the other high officials agreed on all points in matters connected with the government. Three of the superior clergy, 'Abbā Ḥasabo, 'Abbā 'Āmdu, and one Me'emān, complained of the autocratic rule of Tasfā Gīyōrgīs, and many approved of their complaints: the malcontents were seized and punished, and some were deported, and of the latter many died on the way. The young king went to Yalabāsha, where his father had lived, and was crowned there and performed the ancient ceremonies. In his reign a number of bishops came from Jerusalem, the priests increased in number, and the churches were rebuilt or restored. He left Shoa and went to Amḥarā and visited Ganata-Gīyōrgīs, Dabra Naguadguād and 'Atronsa Māryām, where he held a service to commemorate his father; and he finished the building of 'Atronsa Māryām which his father had begun. Then he and his chief minister Za-Selūs ዘሥሉስ፣ returned to Shoa.

## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

The Chronicle goes on to say that 'Eskender was of a bold disposition and was an expert horseman, and well trained in the use of the bow and shield and spear, and that at the same time he was gracious, compassionate and merciful. But he unfortunately let the soldiers get the upper hand, and though they oppressed the people cruelly he did nothing to restrain them. In the second year of his reign he determined to make war on Adal, and though the clergy advised him not to do so, he persisted in his intention and set out for Dakkar, which was the seat of the Arab kings of Adal, and lay to the east of Abyssinia, and he destroyed the houses and mosques of the town. When he left the town to return to Shoa, the Muslims pursued him, and when he began to fight them all his soldiers ran away; the Muslims gave chase, and though they were few in number they cut down and killed many Christians as they ran, and captured a number of prisoners. The king managed to escape and reached his palace unharmed. Here for a time he lived nursing plans for another attack on Adal, which however did not take place. In memory of his dead soldiers he built a temple called Dabra Meshwā'e **ደብረ ምሥዋዕት**, i.e. the Monastery of the Offering, or sacrifice. One day when he was in his chamber an envoy came and said, "The men of the 'Arhō **አርዎ** have killed Taklāy, thy favourite slave." According to d'Abbadie (*Dict. Amar.*, col. 458), "'Arhō" means a "caravan." That evening the king set out to go to the place where his slave had been killed, and when the men of the Māy **ማይ** caravan saw him and his men, they thought that they were ordinary soldiers who had come to punish them for their crime, and did not recognize the king. The caravan men attacked the royal party and shot at them with their bows in the darkness of the night, and the king was wounded and died on the 12th day of Genbōt, and was buried at Dabra Warq in the province of Godjam. When the Abyssinians heard of this they went to 'Arhō and massacred everybody, men, women and children. The body of 'Eskender was placed in a temporary tomb, and Za Selūs and his soldiers rode off to Amḥarā to appoint a king, ordering the men who had charge of the king's body not to let anyone carry it away. When Za Selūs arrived and appointed the man of his choice as king, he found that the people of Shoa had already made 'Āmda Şeyōn, the son of

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

'Eskender, their king. The people of 'Amḥarā made war on Za Selūs and killed him and all his party and all the officials who had conspired with him.

The account of 'Eskender given by Bruce (*Travels*, II. p. 295) is somewhat different. According to this the fight at 'Arḥō (the Arno of Bruce) was a real battle, and in the midst of it Za Selūs treacherously retreated, leaving the king to bear the brunt of it, and surrounded by enemies. He was pressed hard by an Arab who carried the green flag of Muḥammad the Prophet in his hand, but he turned suddenly and smote the Arab with his javelin; as the man fell from his horse 'Eskender dragged the green flag from his hands, and speared him with the spear that bore the green flag. The Arab, who was the son of the king of Adal, fell dead, and seeing this, the Arabs fled. Then, hearing that Za Selūs had gone to Amḥarā, and was preaching sedition as he went, 'Eskender followed him with a few troops, and arrived in Tagulat. The second night of his stay there emissaries of Za Selūs set upon him by night and murdered him whilst he was asleep. They hid the king's body for three days, but it was taken from its hiding-place by Takla Krestōs who carried it about the country and showed it to the people, who rose in a mass and made Andreas (*sic*), 'Eskender's son, king.

In the year 1487 John II, king of Portugal, who had always been anxious to enter into communication with "Prester John," sent on a mission to the East the navigators Pedro de Covilham and Alonso, or Affonso de Paiva, believing that this elusive potentate was a king of India. At Aden the two envoys separated, de Covilham continuing his journey eastwards, and de Paiva returning to Abyssinia, where he was murdered. In 1490-91 de Covilham entered Abyssinia and made his way to the court of 'Eskender at Tagulat (1492), where the king received him with great honour. 'Eskender made him his confidant and counsellor and found him so useful that he would not allow him to leave the country. For further details of his life see above, p. 180. According to some authorities 'Eskender was murdered in 1492, but his death was hidden by Queen Helena and her advisers for nearly three years (Morié, tom. II. p. 228), fearing that Za Selūs would succeed in placing a usurper on the throne.







## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

seized by the Muslims. A little later an army of Christians led by Jabrā Tadiyās came and attacked Wanāj Djān, and the battle raged for three days and three nights, and as the Christians were "like ants" in number, and were continually reinforced, the Arabs were routed with great loss. Wanāj Djān took his ḥarīm and soldiers and set out for his own land, but when he arrived at the River Wabī he died. Muḥammad the king came to mourn him and to avenge him; the Christians fled. Later Wasan Sagad marched against the Arabs, who stood their ground and were slain as they sat on their horses. Nūr Aḥmad was wounded in the belly, but Wasan Sagad healed him. Simon, the son of Wanāj Djān, was taken prisoner at the battle of Del-Maida, and the Christians converted him and gave him his father's rank and position. (See *Journal Asiatique*, 1884, p. 331 ff.) Thus Nā'ōd fought no more, but returned to Tagulat and devoted himself to the development of his country. When he became king he treated de Covilham very cruelly, and kept him by force in Abyssinia, but when he saw that the Portuguese had resigned himself to his fate, he restored to him the honours which 'Eskendēr had bestowed upon him, and added to them, and de Covilham gained great power and influence in the country. He was able to communicate frequently with the king of Portugal, and it was probably at his suggestion that Portuguese missionaries were sent to Abyssinia.

LEBNA DENGEL, DĀWIT (DAVID) II, WANĀG SAGAD I

**ለብነ ድንግል ዳዊት ወናግ ሰገድ**

The Chronicle published by Basset (p. 103) says, "Up to this time, the country had neither been dismembered nor invaded by any enemy; on the contrary, the kings [of Abyssinia] had conquered many kings. 'Āmda Šeyōn (I) defeated ten kings even before he had collected his troops. The invasion of our country by enemies began under King Lebna Dengel, the son of King Nā'ōd." Lebna Dengel means "incense of the Virgin," and the word "Wanāg" in his throne name, Wanāg Sagad, means "lion."

Lebna Dengel was the son of Nā'ōd by his wife, the distinguished Queen Sabla Wangēl ሰብሉ ወንጌል, and he reigned 32 years and 32 days, *i.e.* from the 18th of Naḥasē (22nd August 1508) to the 5th of Maskaram (13th September, 1540). He had four brothers:

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

Victor (a half brother), who was slain in battle, Jacob, who predeceased his father, Claudius and Mīnas. As Nā'ōd had several children, the choice of a successor to him caused some dissensions in Abyssinia, but it was soon decided by the wise old queen Helena, who had already governed the country under four reigns, and by the Abūna Marcus, that Lebna Dengel should be the new king. The Abyssinians agreed to this decision, for the queen had for many years directed affairs of state with conspicuous success, and had managed to stave off the invasion of the country by the Muslims, which she saw was coming nearer and nearer. By race she was an Arab, and her father was Muḥammad, governor of Dawārō, and her great wish was to see peace between the Adalites and the Abyssinians. She realized to the full that in the end the Adalites, at least that section of them who were Arabs, and were of superior ability in every way to the Abyssinians, were certain to become masters of her country, and she foresaw clearly the ruin and destruction which would follow their invasion if they entered Abyssinia as conquerors, flushed with victory and drunk with religious fanaticism. Besides using every effort to maintain peace, she spared herself no trouble in trying to make the Portuguese allies of the Abyssinians, for through their fleets they were masters of the Eastern seas, and they had at that time the monopoly of all the sea-borne trade between India, the Persian Gulf, southern Arabia and Somaliland. When she set Lebna Dengel on the throne he was about eleven or twelve years of age, and obviously could know nothing about the government of his country or the political situation. She did the best possible thing for her country, as subsequent events proved clearly, when she kept the government of the country in her own hands. And it must be remembered that the only successes in war which Lebna Dengel gained came to him during her lifetime. The principal authorities in Ethiopic for the reign of Lebna Dengel are the Chronicle published by Basset from a Paris manuscript, and the Life of the King contained in the great history of Malak Sagad which is found in the Bodleian MS. No. XXIX and in Brit. Mus. MS. Orient. 821. (See Dillmann, *Cat. Codd. MSS.*, p. 76 ff.; Wright, *Catalogue*, CCCXCII; and Zotenberg, *Cat. Bibl. Nat.*, No. 143.) The Ethiopic text of the latter has been published, with an Italian translation by Rossini, in the

## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

*Rendiconti* of the Accademia dei Lincei, Rome, Sept. 1894, and from this edition the following facts about the first part of the reign of Lebna Dengel have been derived.

Lebna Dengel was twelve years old when he ascended the throne, and up to that time he had devoted himself, after the manner of princes, to exercises in horsemanship, shooting with the bow, and hunting wild beasts. His counsellors and directors were Queen Helena, his mother Nā'ōd Mogasā, and the general Wasan Sagad, "the father of the poor," who was killed by the Gerād 'Abīd at the battle of Korkorā. In his 20th year (1527?) Lebna Dengel marched against Maḥāmad, king of Adal, whose army was led by Maḥfūd, and he defeated him and routed his army. Maḥāmad managed to escape, chiefly through the help of the Muslims who lived in Dawārō. Lebna Dengel then invaded Adal and burnt towns and destroyed fortresses, and he laid waste the king's castle in Zankar. No man raised a hand to stop him, for every one had fled in terror before him, and he captured many prisoners, men, women and children. At that time there was universal peace and contentment in Abyssinia, the weak were helped, the poor were protected, and the king's throne was established on justice and mercy. At the close of the 20th year of the reign of Lebna Dengel there rose up in Adal Aḥmad, the son of Ibrāhim. From his youth up he was a restless, wild man, and when he proclaimed that he was against the Government, rebels and malcontents gathered about him, and he formed a large army. Attempts were made to suppress him by the governors, but he defeated over and over again all the troops that were sent against him. His fame spread throughout the land, and his name inspired terror even in the hearts of the Muslims of Adal. Meanwhile Lebna Dengel was devoting himself to the study of the Scriptures and religious works, and in converse with holy men among whom was Sarṣa Dengel.

In the 19th (?) year of his reign Lebna Dengel sent Dēgalhan ጊጊልህን with a large, well-trained army into Adal, and he marched thither by the 'Ifāt road. He swept through the country of Adal like a flame of fire, and made prisoners of all the men and women he found in it, and even seized Faṭ[ma], the mother of Ḳatchtchen Abbōker ቀጭን አባከር. When she was taken before Dēgalhan

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

she said to him, "What is the good of having captured me? My capture will be the end of the burning, and your conquest will turn into defeat. My son is a bold, strong man, his heart is ready to fight, and his feet are swift to run to war and to shed blood. Verily if you do not send me back, my son shall never rest until he has delivered me from your hands." And whilst the words were on her lips Grāñ appeared suddenly, and descended upon them like a thunderbolt. The Christians fled helter-skelter, no man knowing or caring where he was going as long as he could get away. The mounted soldiers left their horses and mules and ran away, and no man tried to save any possessions he had. This crushing defeat of the Christians took place in Kebot. The fugitives ran in all directions, some went to Dawārō, some to Faṭagār, some by 'Īfāt and some by Gedem. Everything fell into the hands of Grāñ, *i.e.* the "Left-handed," whose name was Ahmad, the son of Ibrāhīm, and his army was swelled in numbers and he was filled with pride and arrogance. Giāñ was victorious in another battle with the Christians at Shamberā Kuerē ሸፍብራ፡ከራ፡ and returned to his country with great spoil. With the second coming of Grāñ the real tribulation of the Christians began. He burnt Dabra Libānōs and a large number of churches in Dawārō, Faṭagār and Shēw. In the second year of his second raid he burnt the churches of Amḥarā, including Makāna Seltāsē, and Atronsa Māryām. His power was great, and he ruled from the Sea of Aftal to the Sea of Dakhanō ደኸኖ፡, *i.e.* from the Island of Zeyla to Massāwah. Lebna Dengel was buried in the monastery of Abbā 'Aṡagāwī, or Dabra Dāmō.

Curiously enough the chronicler of the above has failed to give a proper idea of the importance of the victory which Lebna Dengel gained over the Adalites and the clever strategy which he employed on that occasion. There was a large, deep valley between Faṭigār and Adal, with precipitous mountains on either side of it, and a very narrow pass at each end. The king divided his army into two parts; he took command of one, and the Beht Wadad commanded the other. Secretly he led his army to the pass at one end of the valley and remained there hidden. The Beht Wadad then threatened an attack on the Adalite army on the plain; and the Arab general, fearing the result of a battle if fought there, led his

## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

soldiers through the narrow pass into the valley, and the Beht Wadal and his army followed. Thus the Adalites were shut up in the valley with a hostile army at each end of it. The Arab general Mas'ūdī, or Malḥūd, persuaded his king Muḥammad to leave the fighting to him, and he was only too glad to make his way out of the valley by a way which the general showed him. Then Mas'ūdī sent a challenge into the Abyssinian camp, and offered to fight any man of rank in the army in single combat, provided that the victory should be accounted to belong to the army whose champion was victorious, and that both Christian and Muslim should withdraw their troops without further bloodshed. The challenge was accepted, and Gabriel Andrew, who had lost the tip of his tongue through his plain speaking, by general consent became the champion of the Christians. The protagonists met and the fight began, and Andrew, watching his opportunity, struck the Arab between his neck and shoulders, nearly cleaving his body in two, and the Arab fell dead on the ground. Andrew cut his head off and threw it at the king's feet, saying, "There is the Goliath of the infidels." These words served as a signal to charge, and the king drove the Arabs along the valley, where they were met by the soldiers of the Beht Wadal, who drove them back to the king. Escape was impossible, and it is said that about 12,000 Muslims were slain; the rest fled to the mountains, where they perished of hunger and thirst. The Christian loss was inconsiderable. The green standard of Muḥammad was taken, and the black velvet tent embroidered with gold, and a large quantity of valuable Indian silks, brocades and embroideries. The battle was fought in July 1516, and on the same day the Island of Zeyla was taken and the town burnt by the Portuguese under Lopez Saurez Alberguiera.

In this same year on the 26th of August the Egyptian army, led by Ḳansūh al-Ghūrī, was defeated at Marg Dābik, a little to the north of Aleppo, by Salīm I, the son of Bāyezīd II, Sultān of Turkey. In January 1517 Salīm marched upon Cairo, and on the 26th he entered Cairo in state, and on April 14 he hanged Tūmān Beg, who had been elected Sultān of Egypt at the Zawīla gate. Within a year Sinān Pāshā, Salīm's general, had overrun all Arabia, and under one excuse or another managed to kill all the governors and notables who offered the least opposition to him; even those

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

who submitted to him were quietly but promptly got rid of. He appointed Turkish governors in all the towns, and supplied each with a company of Turkish soldiers to support his authority. The Turks occupied at once all the ports on the Arabian side of the Red Sea, and the great port of Sawākin on the African coast, and they established garrisons there and customs houses. Their primary object was not conquest, but the control of the overland and sea-borne trade between Egypt and India, and the power to rob merchant caravans and plunder merchant ships. When the Turks seized the ports on the Arabian coast, merchants landed their goods on the African shore of the Red Sea, and for a time all went well with them. Thereupon the Turks seized the Island of Zeyla, where they established a customs house and a fleet of small, swift cutters, with which they attacked merchant vessels. The presence of the Turk in the Red Sea was a very disturbing element, for both the Adalians and the Abyssinians knew that the newcomers, who brought with them firearms and artillery, could, whenever they pleased, seize the countries of them both. The Adalians, being of the same religion as the Turks, found it comparatively easy to arrange a *modus vivendi* with them, and the Turks of course benefited by the information about the trade of the country which they could give them. With the Abyssinians the matter was entirely different, for they were Christians, and hated the followers of the Prophet with a fierce, undying hatred. And after all the Abyssinians were, even at that time, not very greatly removed from a state of half-savagery, and their weapons were still the bow and arrow, the spear and javelin, the leather shield and the club, while the Turks had brought with them firearms and cannon, Greek fire, and methods of warfare totally unknown to the Abyssinians. Until the coming of the Turks the weapons of war of both Muslims and Christians were substantially the same, and victory on either side usually followed on surprise, rapidity of attack, and the personal bravery of the soldiers.

The astute old queen Helena could not fail to see that the invasion and conquest of her country was inevitable unless she could find some European ally. She sent an embassy to Kaṣūh al-Ghūrī, the last Mamlūk Sultān of Egypt, in 1516, and it was well received by him, but as he died that same year it availed her



## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

nothing. Then hearing of the great victories which the Portuguese had gained in the Indian Ocean, and how they had destroyed the trade of Egypt with India, she determined to appeal for help to the king of Portugal, and she was probably helped by de Covilham, the Portuguese, who was still to all intents and purposes a prisoner in the country, in drawing up her letters to this king. She chose for her envoy an Armenian merchant called Matthew, and sent with him a young Abyssinian noble, who died on the way; Matthew carried with him a piece of the wood of the True Cross and certain letters, and had also received from the queen secret instructions. He was arrested as a spy at Dabul in India, but was released in 1513 by Albuquerque and sent from Goa to Lisbon, where he was honourably received by King Emmanuel. The king decided to send a Mission to Abyssinia and chose as his envoy E. de Galvan, who was then 90 years of age, and he and Matthew sailed from Lisbon (1515) with the fleet commanded by Lopez Alvarez. The envoy de Galvan died on the Island of Kamaran, and Matthew did not reach Massāwah until 1520, or some say 1525 (see Ludolf, *Hist. Aeth.*, Bk. II. chap. xvi; Tellez, *Historia geral*, tom. II. chap. v; Goetz, *De Ethiopia moribus*, p. 383 f.). R. de Lima, who was with Alvarez and Matthew, took the place of de Galvan. After much delay and discussion R. de Lima arranged matters with the Bāḥar Nagash at Arkiko, and the Mission, consisting of sixteen Portuguese, set out to find Lebna Dengel, who had defeated Maḥfūḍ and was then pacifying the provinces of Dawārō and Faṭagār. On the journey to the court of Lebna Dengel Matthew died at the monastery of Bizan. Though the Portuguese stayed at the court of Lebna Dengel, or David, as he was then called, at Gondar, they failed to make any treaty of alliance with him. At that time Lebna Dengel, flushed with his victories, did not seem to wish for an alliance with Portugal, though his country needed it sorely. When de Lima set out in 1526 (or 1531?) on his return journey the king sent with him a monk called Sagā Za'ab, commonly known as Zagazabo. The fabulous account of the journey of the Mission and its stay in Abyssinia written by Alvarez is well known through Lord Stanley's translation of it published by the Hakluyt Society. Zagazabo supplied both Goetz and João de Barros with much information about the country, which is generally untrustworthy,

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

and they incorporated it in their works; this fact was made clear by both Godinho and Ludolf. Among other absurdities he told the Portuguese, to please them, that the Abyssinian Church was in accord with the Roman Church in respect of the matters which divided the Latins and the Eutychians.

In 1527, or according to some 1533, Şagā Za'ab handed the letters of Lebna Dengel to John II, king of Portugal, and they contained a proposition for an alliance against the Muslims. Lebna Dengel offered gold and soldiers, and in return asked for artisans, carpenters, metal-workers, etc. In his letter to Pope Clement VII, which was handed to His Holiness at Bologna in the presence of Charles V (1534), he acknowledged the supremacy of the Pope. J. Bermudez, physician of R. de Lima, remained in Abyssinia, and was subsequently made Patriarch of Abyssinia. The immediate effect of this Mission in Abyssinia was disastrous, for the caravans of pilgrims to Jerusalem were massacred, and the Turks, with Arabia in their hands, determined to conquer Abyssinia, and to keep Europeans from taking any part in the trade between the Red Sea and India. They made some sort of alliance with the Adalites and supplied them with firearms, which of course made the result of any battle between them and the Abyssinians a foregone conclusion. They found a very useful tool for their purpose in one Aḥmad, or Muḥammad (in Somali "Gūray"), the son of Ibrāhīm, who had married Del-Wambarā, the daughter of Maḥfūḍ, and was made the Amīr of Harrar. The Pāshā of Zēbid sent him companies of artillerymen and cannon, and the Sharīf of Makkah sent him hordes of Arab mercenaries, and with these behind him Aḥmad, the Grāñ, *i.e.* the "Left-handed," set out on his mission of destruction in Abyssinia. Lebna Dengel had no one with sufficient authority to guide or control him, for the aged Empress Helena, who had been the power behind the throne, and had ruled Abyssinia for so many years, died in 1525 aged 75 years.

Grāñ began the conquest of Abyssinia in the 19th year of the reign of Lebna Dengel, *i.e.* in 1527, and the Chronicles show that from that year to the day of his death the king of Abyssinia was to all intents and purposes a hunted man. In 1527 Grāñ advanced as far as Samarmā; in the battle which took place early in March

## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

many of the chief officials, *e.g.* Gabra Madhēn, and Şāfalām Robēl, governor of Amba Gēshenā, were killed. In 1529 Grāñ left Adal and marched into Dawārō in eastern Abyssinia, near Bālī and 'Īfāt; in the battle at Ayfars at the end of March Rās Eslām Sagad, the Abyssinian Commander-in-chief, and other high officers were killed, and Grāñ occupied Shoa, and burnt Dabra Libānōs. In 1531 Lebna Dengel was obliged to leave Amḥarā, and he went and established himself at Haguā, but he was driven out by Grāñ, who burnt Makāna Shelāsē, Dabra Naguadguād, Atronsa Māryām and Ganata Gīyōrgīs, all on the left bank of the 'Abāī river. And having looted Ḥayḵ on the Shoan frontier, he departed to his own country for a year.

In the 25th year of the reign of Lebna Dengel (1533) he returned and looted Warwar **ወርወር**, where he passed the winter. The following year Grāñ came down into Tigray, and was received by the Sirē **ሲራ** and the Serāwē **ሰራዌ**. Lebna Dengel wintered in Dembeyā, and went on through Wagarā and Şalamet **ረለምት** on the Takaze to Aksūm, where he kept the festival of the Epiphany. When he left the old capital and was passing Şagadē, Grāñ pursued him and burnt the church of Abbā Samuel, and then went on to Mazagā, on the frontier of Sennaar, where he made friends with the Muslim tribe Makāter **መካትር**, who gave him guides to Dembeyā. Lebna Dengel fled to Darā, to the south-east of Lake Şānā, hotly pursued by Grāñ, and in the battle which followed near the place where the 'Abāī leaves the Lake, many of the Abyssinian notables were killed.

In the 27th year of the reign of Lebna Dengel (1535), the Abyssinians attacked Sem'ōn in Amḥarā and were defeated with great loss. Grāñ burnt Aksūm, the monastery of Hällēlō **ሃሌሎ**, Bankōl, Lagasō and Dabra Karbē. He attacked and defeated Sāwel and occupied Samēn, Dembeyā and Bēgamder. In 1536 Grāñ invaded Godjam **ጎዳም**, to the south of Lake Şānā, and massacred the people both there and in Sarāwē; in 1537 he burnt Galilā. That same year the Muslims invaded Dawārō and stayed there eight months, and then went on to Angot **አንጎት** (1538). In the following year Grāñ sent an embassy to Lebna Dengel and asked for his daughter in marriage, and pointed out to him that if he refused to do so, there was no one

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

left with whom he could take refuge. The king replied, "I will not give her to thee for thou art an unbeliever; it is better to fall into the power of the Lord, Whose majesty is as great as His mercy, than into thine." Grāñ was furious, and began a rigorous pursuit of the king, who was suffering from hunger and exhaustion and sickness. In every encounter with Grāñ's soldiers the Abyssinians were defeated, and many were made prisoners, and much spoil fell into the enemy's hands. And at this moment, when their country was being laid waste from one end to the other, the people began to quarrel among themselves about the day on which it was proper to keep Easter! The king observed the festival on the day prescribed by the Roman Church.

About that time Fiḳṭōr (Victor), the king's eldest son by his first wife, was killed by the Garād 'Esmān አስግንጎ (Uthmān?), and all who were with him. During an attack made upon the king by an Arab called 'Emar, his son Prince Mīnās was taken prisoner, and all his soldiers, who were sold as slaves. All this happened in Wāg ዋግ at a place called Zātā, on the right bank of the Takaze. When the king was in Salawā, 'Emar came and captured all his soldiers, and he was obliged to flee with a few friends to the mountain of Tchelmefrā ታሎፍራ, in the country of Ṣalamet. From this place of refuge he was hunted out by İyōrām, the governor of the country, and when he came to the River Takaze the Lord wrought a miracle for him and he crossed the great river walking on the face of the water, and was able to reach Tabr and winter there. In 1540 he succeeded in killing the Arab governor, Aḥmad al-Dīn, who had been pillaging the churches. 'Emar continued to pursue the king, but when he left Dembeyā, 'Emar went down into Sirē and burnt and pillaged the churches. But death came upon him suddenly, for one night when he was in bed with his wife, a man, name unknown, found his way into the chamber, and stabbed him in the body several times, and he died. That same year the Arabs broke into and plundered the royal storehouse called Gēshē Amba Nagast, and carried off an immense quantity of gold and precious stuffs; and they slew all the princes and princesses who were shut up therein. The Arabs were led by Mujāhid, the governor of Harrar, who was guided to the Amba by a treacherous native.

## THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA

The Mission which Lebna Dengel had sent to the king of Portugal several years before his death had no result, and when he found himself hunted from country to country by Grāñ, and with only a small portion of his kingdom left to him, he determined to send yet another Mission to Portugal. He had kept Jean Bermudez, the physician to the Portuguese embassy, as a hostage with him in Abyssinia, and as this wise and discreet man had become a counsellor to him, he determined to send him as his ambassador to Portugal. He gave him the title of Patriarch of Abyssinia, and dispatched him with a small company of notables to beg assistance from the king of Portugal, and to promise him that if he sent help he would acknowledge the supremacy of the Pope. Bermudez went to Lisbon, where he was honourably received by John III, who recognized his new title, which had been confirmed by the Pope, and gave him letters to the Portuguese Viceroy in India instructing him to send ships immediately, with four or five hundred soldiers, to help the king of Abyssinia to fight the Muslims. Bermudez set out for Goa forthwith and arrived there in 1539, and presented his letters to Don Garcia de Noronha, the Viceroy. The Patriarch fell ill, and Don Garcia was succeeded by E. de Gama, who displayed no great zeal in helping the Abyssinians. In due course ships and soldiers left Goa for the Red Sea, but when they arrived Lebna Dengel was dead, and a new king sat upon the uneasy throne of Abyssinia.

To describe rightly the character of Lebna Dengel is a difficult matter. At the age of 13 or 14 he was so proud of his own powers, and so confident in his abilities, that having reviewed his army, of which he was the absolute lord and master, he prayed that God would give him an enemy who was really capable of testing his strength. He, without the least reason for doing so, called himself Bāḥar Nagash ቤሐር ነገሥት, or King of the Sea, and Friend of God, Pillar of the Faith, etc. He was a devoted Christian, and had an unbounded faith in God, and he at all times acknowledged that He alone was able to save and protect His creatures. As far as I can see, his sympathies had always lain with the Church of Rome, and it is quite wrong to say that his submission to the Pope was the result of misfortune and calamity. He was a lover of literature, and up to 1527 favoured the translation of Greek and Arabic works into Gē'ez or Eḥiopic. During the first 18 years of his reign

## ETHIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS

Michael the Younger translated the 79 Miracles of St George, and the Commentary of John Chrysostom on the Epistle to the Hebrews, into Gē'ez. Walda 'Ali translated the Hebrew version of a Syriac Commentary on the Four Gospels into Gē'ez, and the ascetic works of John Saba were translated into 'Ethiopic by the king's command. (See Wright, *Catalogue*, Nos. 288-292; Dillmann, *Cat. Codd. Brit. Mus.*, No. 10, and the remarks of Basset, *Études*, p. 258.) His bravery in war won the admiration of both friend and foe: What his feelings were when he saw his soldiers defeated year after year, and his kingdom slipping from him province by province, may well be imagined, but he did not give way to despair, and his sublime faith in God enabled him to stand unmoved, and to resist to the utmost. He was hunted about from mountain crag to mountain crag, suffering hunger and thirst, and the extremes of heat and cold with a courage that can only have been born of a sense of duty to his country and responsibility for his people which was almost divine. He was a greater man than the greatest of his conquerors, and he proved to his people that the Christian ideal is the mightiest and most lasting thing in the world.

Some European writers on the reign of this king have said that after the death of the great queen Helena, Lebna Dengel gave himself up to a life of debauchery, even allowing his concubines to keep idols in his palace (Bruce, *Travels*, II. p. 354). It is possible that there were negro women from the south in his compounds, and that they had brought with them sacred stones or objects of some kind. And if there were Egyptian women among his concubines they may have brought figures of gods and amulets from Egypt, but as the Abyssinians have always hated graven images it is unlikely that this most Christian king would in any way tolerate the cult of such things. It is easy to understand how horrified the earliest Portuguese priests and missionaries would be as they travelled up from the sea-coast and learned what "the custom of the country" was in respect of women, and allowance must be made for this horror when reading their descriptions of the manners and customs of the people, for they would judge Christians and pagans with the same judgment. Lebna Dengel may have indulged in debaucheries, but the modern historian cannot find any period in his life when he had the leisure to devote himself to such things.

